

**Commemorating the Sixty-Sixth Anniversary of  
the Sixty-Six Harrodsburg Tankers**



Compiled by  
**JOHN M. TROWBRIDGE**  
JASON M. LeMay  
2008

## Contents

<b>A Tribute to the Sixty-Six Men of Company D, .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>    by Louise Isham Dean</b>	
<b>Introduction/Acknowledgments .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Lineage and Honors – 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>History of the Harrodsburg Tankers</b>	
<b>Early History .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Preparing for War .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>War Comes to the Philippines .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Surrender, the Death March and Years of Captivity .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Liberation and Return Home .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>THE HARRODSBURG TANKERS –</b>	
<b>Company D, 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion:</b>	
<b>Harrodsburg’s Guardsmen Who Returned Following Captivity .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Harrodsburg’s Guardsmen Who Perished During Captivity .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>The Harrodsburg Tankers Memorial .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>2008 Program – Proclamation, Coin and U. S. Postal Service Cancellation..</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>53</b>

**A Tribute to the Sixty-Six Men of Company D**  
**The 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion of Harrodsburg, Kentucky both living and dead, who**  
**sacrificed that freedom may live.<sup>i</sup>**

**Louise Isham Dean**

Nearly forty years ago,  
When folks all went to town,  
They talked almost to everyone  
About the news around.

And always on their hearts and minds,  
Was a concern about the men,  
Who were prisoners of a war  
In a land where they had never been.

In a window on Main Street  
Were pictures of these men,  
And folks stopped by to see them  
Over and over again.

Not knowing when the war would end,  
Or knowing anything to be,  
Just praying for the war to cease,  
With total victory.

From some, there was no word  
To comfort or console,  
But there was love and there was hope  
From the depths of our very soul.

Twenty-nine men did not return  
And we honor them today  
With remembrance that is special  
In a very special way.

Thirty-seven men came home  
And thanks be to God, we say  
For bringing them safely home  
On that Glorious, Wonderful Day,

It doesn't seem quite possible  
That all these years have passed  
Since the time of liberation  
And the men were free at last.

It is our prayer to Almighty God,  
That never, never again  
Will such atrocities ever occur,  
As happened to our sixty-six men.

This tribute to you is from the heart  
And words are inadequate, you see,  
So accept our thanks, our gratitude  
For all eternity.

## Introduction/Acknowledgments

The year 2008 marks the Sixty-Sixth Anniversary of the fall of Bataan during the Second World War and the beginning of the captivity of 66 young men from Harrodsburg, Kentucky. On Saturday April 26th, the Kentucky National Guard paid special tribute to the Harrodsburg Tankers who participated in the Bataan Death March during WWII.

Before World War II, the Harrodsburg Tankers were the 38th Tank Company of the Kentucky Army National Guard. They were among the first Kentuckians called to active duty in preparation for World War II. When they went on federal active duty they became Company D, 192nd Light Tank Battalion. On Thanksgiving Day, 1941, The Harrodsburg Tankers landed in the Philippines. On 7 December, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor and only hours later they began an attack on the Philippines. The Harrodsburg Tankers, along with the allied forces, fought the Japanese valiantly without reinforcements or resupply until ordered by their superiors to surrender in April 1942. Those who could not escape to Corregidor were in the infamous "Bataan Death March." They were all eventually taken prisoner of war. Only 37 of the original 66 Kentucky Guard Members from Harrodsburg survived Japanese captivity.

There are many individuals who deserve special recognition for their contributions to this publication. The main text is taken from Colonel (Ret) Joseph Craft's, draft manuscript, *Kentucky National Guard History, World War II – Berlin Crisis 1937-1962*. We would like to thank Mr. James Russell Harris and the staff of the Kentucky Historical Society for their assistance with information and images. Special thanks to CW4 James D. Pope and his digital collection of images for the publication. Thanks for their research assistance to the staffs of the Kentucky Department of Military Affairs, Military Records and Research Branch, in Frankfort, Kentucky, and the staff of the Armor School Library, Fort Knox, Kentucky. We are indebted to Mr. Tomas W. Fugate for information pertaining to the Yunker map of Camp O'Donnell. To these and all who helped with this publication go our sincere thanks.



Colonel (Ret) Joseph Craft

*Special Thanks to Jim Opolony, Coordinator of the Proviso East Bataan Commemorative Project.*

Opolony is a teacher at Proviso East High School in Maywood, Illinois and he along with two other teachers started the Proviso East High School Bataan Commemorative Research Project website during the 1999 -2000 school year. The website, still an ongoing project, has become one of the most respected resources available about the men of Harrodsburg and all those who served in the 192nd Tank Battalion and a source of much of the biographical material and photos of the Harrodsburg tankers. You can visit their site here: <http://www.proviso.k12.il.us/Bataan%20Web/index.htm>



## **Lineage and Honors 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion**

Constituted 1 September 1940 in the National Guard as the 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion and partially organized by redesignation of existing Tank Companies from the states of Wisconsin, Illinois, Ohio, and Kentucky as follows: Company A (organized in the Wisconsin National Guard as Company I, Tank Corps, and Federally recognized 31 March 1920 at Janesville; redesignated 32<sup>nd</sup> Tank Company, Special Troops, 32<sup>nd</sup> Division, 30 November 1921); Company B (constituted in the Illinois National Guard as Company G, Tank Corps, organized and Federally recognized 17 November 1920 at Maywood. Redesignated 33<sup>rd</sup> Tank Company, Special Troops, 33<sup>rd</sup> Division, 13 December 1921 and disbanded 12 April 1929. Reconstituted, reorganized and Federally recognized 3 May 1929); Company C (organized in the Ohio National Guard as Company H, Tank Corps, and Federally recognized 21 June 1920 at Port Clinton; redesignated 37<sup>th</sup> Tank Company, 1 July 1921); and Company D (organized in the Kentucky National Guard as the 38<sup>th</sup> Tank Company, 38<sup>th</sup> Division Special Troops and Federally recognized 29 March 1921 at Harrodsburg. Disbanded 7 April 1932. Reorganized and Federally recognized 5 July 1932).

Headquarters and Headquarters Company organized at Fort Knox, Kentucky and inducted into Federal service, 20 September 1940, organic companies inducted into Federal service as follows: Company A – 25 November 1940 at Janesville; Company B – 25 May 1940 at Maywood; Company C – 15 October 1940 at Port Clinton; and Company D – 25 November 1940 at Harrodsburg. Surrendered 9 April 1942 to the Japanese 14<sup>th</sup> Army in the Philippine Islands. Inactivated 2 April 1946 in the Philippines and organic companies reverted to States of origin. Headquarters and Headquarters Company allotted to the Kentucky National Guard, 13 May 1946.

### CAMPAIGN STREAMERS

#### **World War II**

Philippines Islands

### DECORATIONS

Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered BATAAN (Provisional Tank Group USAFFE cited for period 8-31 December 1941; WD GO 14, 1942).

Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered LUZON 1941-1942 (Provisional Tank Group USAFFE cited for period 6 Jan-14 Feb 1942; WD GO 14, 1942).

Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered DEFENSE OF THE PHILIPPINES (USAFFE cited for period 7 Dec 1941-10 May 1942; WD GO 22, 1942 as amended by DA GO 46, 1948).

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation, Streamer embroidered 7 DECEMBER 1941 TO 10 MAY 1942 (192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Bn cited; DA GO 47, 1950).

### COAT OF ARMS

None.

### DISTINCTIVE INSIGNIA

None.

# HISTORY OF THE HARRODSBURG TANKERS

*We're the battling bastards of Bataan;  
No mama, no papa, no Uncle Sam;  
No aunts, no uncles, no cousins, no nieces;  
No pills, no planes, no artillery pieces;  
...And nobody gives a damn.*

Battle cry of the Philippines Defense Forces

## Early History of Thirty-eighth Tank Company

The Thirty-eighth Tank Company is the successor of Company "D," Kentucky State Guard, which was organized at Covington for State duty in the absence of the regular unit on Federal service in France during the World War I.

The unit was called on for active field service at various times during that period, notably at Lexington, Kentucky, during a riot in February, 1920, in which six persons were killed and twenty injured. In March, 1921, this unit was converted to the new Thirty-eighth Tank Company and was extended Federal recognition under date of March 29, 1921, under the command of Capt. Louis V. Crockett. This unit was called upon repeatedly for active field service in the Eastern Kentucky mine fields and other service in the state until its disbandment in March, 1932.



Kentucky National Guard in the Harlan County Coal Strike of 1939. Courtesy Kentucky Historical Society.

The 38th Tank Company was reorganized at Harrodsburg, Kentucky, in June, 1932, and was extended Federal recognition under the date of July 5, 1932. Its officers were Capt. Bacon R. Moore, First Lieut. George W. Biggerstaff, First Lieut. Truman Mayes, Second Lieut. Charles D. Clarkson and Second Lieut. Davis H. Gritton, all of whom had seen service in the World War I.

Each year the Company has passed Federal Inspection with satisfactory rating and has attended field training at Fort Knox. In 1936 it was engaged in the Second Army Maneuvers.

On January 22, 1937, Captain Moore, Lieutenant Gritton, Lieutenant Rue, and thirty-five enlisted men were called for prison riot and flood duty at Frankfort. Lieutenant Gritton as Mess Officer prepared food for 3,000 people; Lieutenant Rue was detailed to the Capitol for ten days; and eighteen of the men were on trucks four days moving convicts to other prisons. From February 1 to February 8 Captain Moore, with seventy-five men, maintained quarantine guard running from Louisville up River Road behind the city to the Dixie Highway. Fourteen men stayed on prison guard duty until June.

The Tank Company has two M 2 T 2 tanks (twin turrets also known as Mae West). Captain Moore completed the Tank School course at Fort Benning, Georgia, on June 17, 1933, and Staff Sgt. Parsons completed the Tank Course at Fort Benning in the fall of 1936.

In May, 1938, Lieutenant Biggerstaff was promoted to Captain and assigned to duty on the State Staff.

Lieutenant Gritton was promoted to First Lieutenant and Pvt. George A. Van Arsdall was promoted to Second Lieutenant.



**Members of the 38<sup>th</sup> Tank Company guarded prisoners from the Frankfort Penitentiary in a temporary prison camp in Frankfort after the Penitentiary was evacuated due to flooding in 1937.**



**Harrodsburg Guardsmen spent days moving prisoners from the Frankfort Penitentiary to other prisons in military trucks during the 1937 Flood.**

# Thirty-Eighth

## TANK COMPANY, SPECIAL TROOPS THIRTY-EIGHTH DIVISION

HARRODSBURG, KENTUCKY

(1) Ready for Action. (2) Squad Wedge—Riot Duty. (3) Machine Gun Instruction. (4) Six Foot Three Plus. (5) Tanks with Members of 38th Tank Company Aboard. (6) Non-Commissioned Officers. (7) Present Pistols.





BACON R. MOORE  
Captain

GEORGE W. BIGGERSTAFF  
First Lieutenant



# THIRTY-EIGHTH TANK COMPANY

SPECIAL TROOPS, THIRTY-EIGHTH DIVISION

### SHOWN IN PHOTOGRAPH

First Row: S. H. Rowland, J. B. Parsons, O. Darland, C. S. Gritton, W. G. Terhune, A. T. VanDyver, J. Anns.

Second Row: R. Pearson, D. Payne, J. B. Ledford, W. J. Lawson, H. Leonard, J. Terhune, C. McAuley.

Third Row: C. G. Tatum, W. Dennis, W. Gentry, R. Dean, R. J. Reed, D. Harlow, E. Elliot, Z. Black.

### COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

Captain	BACON R. MOORE
First Lieutenant	GEORGE W. BIGGERSTAFF
First Lieutenant	TRUMAN MAYES
Second Lieutenant	DAVID H. GRITTON
Second Lieutenant	EDWIN RUE

### NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

First Sergeant	SAM H. ROWLAND
Staff Sergeant	JAMES B. PARSONS

### SERGEANTS

BOTTOMS, JOHNNIE	GRITTON, CLAUDE S.
DARLAND, OWEN	TERHUNE, WILLIAM G.
	VANDYVER, ALLEN T.

### CORPORALS

ANNS, JOE	HOURIGAN, KENNETH
CONLEY, ARCHIE H.	PRISTON, EVERETT
CUMM, JOHN	RUE, INSCHE
FREEMAN, THOMAS W.	STEEL, HENRY C.
GENTRY, RICHARD	VILAW, LAWRENCE
	WILSON, MAURICE E.

### PRIVATE

CARTER, ELMER	HOURIGAN, STANLEY
DEAN, RIBERT	HOURIGAN, HORACE
ELLIOTT, EDWIN	LAWSON, WILLIAM J.
GENTRY, WM.	LEONARD, HUGH
HUFF, LAWRENCE	OSBORNE, HOWARD LEE



**SHOWN IN PHOTOGRAPH**

First Row: M. E. Wilson, R. Gentry, J. Carl, E. Preston, I. Roe, L. Vukow, A. H. Conley.

Second Row: S. Hourigan, J. T. Saylor, E. Elliott, J. W. Pearson, L. Pearson, L. Huff.

Third Row: M. Rogers, E. Carter, C. Yeast, H. B. Fowler, A. Huffman, H. Hourigan.



TRUMAN MAYES  
First Lieutenant



DAVIS H. GRITTON  
Second Lieutenant



EDWIN RUE  
Second Lieutenant

**PRIVATEES**

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| SPARROW, EUGENE      | LEITCH, JAMES B.       |
| TERHUNE, JAMES       | LEONARD, FRED          |
| BLACK, ZELBERT       | MCANLY, CARL           |
| BLACKFEE, WILLIAM E. | MILLER, EDMUND         |
| COLLIER, BUFORD      | ROGERS, CARROL         |
| CROSSFIELD, ALEFET   | ROGERS, MAJOR          |
| DURHAM, JAMES        | STEELE, WILLARD        |
| DENNY, WALLACE       | TATUM, CECIL G.        |
| DEVINE, BEN          | PAYNE, DELLARD         |
| ELLIOTT, VIRGIL P.   | PEARSON, LESLIE        |
| FOWLER, HAROLD B.    | PEARSON, JOHN W.       |
| FRENCH, EDWARD       | PEARSON, RANDELL       |
| FRENCH, MORGAN       | REED, ROY J.           |
| GUPTON, THOMAS       | SAYLOR, JAMES T.       |
| HARLOW, DUBLEY       | TERHUNE, YANDELL       |
| HUFFMAN, ARTHUR      | VAN ARSDALL, GEORGE A. |
| YEAST, CLAUDE        |                        |

**FACTUAL HISTORY**

The Thirty-eighth Tank Company is the successor of Company "D," Kentucky State Guard, which was organized at Covington for State duty in the absence of the regular unit on Federal service in France during the World War.

The unit was called on for active field service at various times during that period, notably at Lexington, Kentucky, during a riot in February, 1920, in which six persons were killed and twenty injured. In March, 1921, this unit was converted to the new Thirty-eighth Tank Company and was extended Federal recognition under date of March 29, 1921, under the command of Capt. Louis V. Crockett. This unit was called upon repeatedly for active field service in the Eastern Kentucky mine fields and other service in the state until its disbandment in March, 1932.

*(Continued on page 717)*

**HARRODSBURG, KY.**

## Preparing For War



The first unit of the Kentucky National Guard inducted into active federal service was Company D, 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion – formerly Harrodsburg’s 38<sup>th</sup> Tank Company—commanded by Second Lieutenant Edwin E. Rue. These Mercer County Guardsmen reported to their home armory on 25 November 1940. They were given physical examinations and those unfit for military service were discharged. Five officers and 71 enlisted men entrained for Fort Knox, Kentucky, arriving on November 28.<sup>ii</sup>



The other three National Guard organizations constituting the 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion were Company A from Janesville, Wisconsin, Company B from Maywood, Illinois, and Company C from Fort Clinton, Ohio. These companies arrived at Fort Knox by 1 December 1940. Individuals from the four letter companies were transferred to a battalion Headquarters Company and inductees arriving in December trained alongside veteran guardsmen.

Training of the newly inducted soldiers of the United States Army included instruction in military courtesy and discipline, physical conditioning, individual, squad, and platoon drills, and the latest scouting and combat techniques. There was intensive training centered on the operation and maintenance of combat tanks. Every day, soldiers attended two classes of advanced instruction in their military occupational specialties and two field training sessions.<sup>iii</sup>

The call to arms came none too soon as developments in Europe and Asia increasingly posed threats to United States security interests. In an attempt to discourage belligerent acts against the nation and its protected territories, President Roosevelt issued Proclamation #2487 on 27 May 1941 declaring “the existence of an unlimited emergency requiring that the military, naval, air, and civil defenses be put on the basis of readiness to repel any and all acts or threats of aggression directed toward any part of the Western Hemisphere.”<sup>iv</sup>

In August 1940, Public Resolution #96 authorized Congress to federalize the National Guard for twelve consecutive months. After the proclamation of unlimited emergency, the length of service was increased to eighteen consecutive months. National Guard units already federalized were included in the extension. Thus, the Harrodsburg guardsmen were to remain in federal service at least until April 1942.

On 31 August 1941, the 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion was transferred to Camp Polk, Louisiana to participate in maneuvers conducted from 2 September to 19 October. Their superior performance prompted Major General George S. Patton, Jr. to recommend the battalion for overseas duty. The soldiers were told only that they were going on “extended maneuvers.”<sup>v</sup>

A notice was issued at Camp Polk stating that anyone below the rank of captain, who was married and the sole support of his family, could apply for discharge. A shortage of trained troops, however, prevented many applicants from receiving discharges. Men who had surpassed an age restriction imposed by the War Department were transferred to non-combat units. The changes affected few Mercer County men.



When a short furlough was granted before the overseas tour, the men of Company D chartered a bus and rode home. Returning to Camp Polk, they were given the highest priority for issues of equipment and supplies. The battalion, with its full complement of light tanks, entrained for Fort Mason in San Francisco, California, on 19 October. The four letter companies took different train routes to California based on War Department

plans to disguise troop movements. All four units arrived in San Francisco on 24 October.

The battalion was ferried across the harbor to Fort McDowell on Angel Island for final processing. Troops were given shots for yellow fever and malaria and were issued personal and organizational equipment. They returned to San Francisco, where on 27 October 1941 sixty-six members of Company D boarded the transport U.S.S. PRESIDENT PIERCE and sailed for an undisclosed destination.



Angel Island

Although traveling under sealed orders, most of the Kentuckians knew they were headed for the Philippines. According to William Gentry, the code word for the secret orders was PLUM. Deducing that PLUM stood for “Philippines-Luzon-Manila,” Gentry says some knew the destination before leaving Louisiana. Other Company D members admitted knowing where they were going before leaving California.<sup>vi</sup>



William Gentry

After a four-day refueling and resupply layover in Honolulu, Hawaii, the battalion continued toward its destination accompanied by the transport U.S.S. PRESIDENT COOLIDGE. Stopping in Guam to take on water, the troops were permitted to mail letters back home. Throughout the voyage, there were daily training sessions in the use of 37-MM anti-tank and 50-caliber machine guns. Nightly shipboard blackouts were explained as being “part of the maneuvers.”

On Thanksgiving Day, 20 November 1941, the 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion disembarked at Fort Avery in Manila. Upon arrival, the battalion was attached to the 194<sup>th</sup> Tank Battalion and stationed at Fort Stotsenburg located at the foot of the Zambales Mountains on the Island of Luzon.

The troops moved by rail to Fort Stotsenburg, leaving equipment and supplies aboard ship. After settling into cantonment areas, a detail returned to port to off-load tanks and half-tracks. They proceeded through the streets of Manila toward Clark Air Field, unaware until informed by a young Filipino soldier that vehicles operate on the left side of the highway instead of the right in the Philippines.<sup>vii</sup>

The Provisional Tank Group, United States Armored Forces in the Far East, commanded by Brigadier General James R. N. Weaver, was created on 27 November 1941. The Provisional Tank Group was composed of Head-quarters Detachment; 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion (Light); 194<sup>th</sup> General Headquarters Tank Battalion (Light), less detachments; and 17<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Company (Armored).<sup>viii</sup>

## War Comes to the Philippines

On 1 December, the Provisional Tank Group was placed on full alert and transferred to Clark Air Field located across the road from Fort Stotsenburg. Senior commanders hoped troop presence would discourage a Japanese attack on the air strip, but that hope was dashed on 8 December. At approximately 12:30 p.m. that day, members of Company D commented on the fine airplanes of the American Navy as fifty-four bombers, flying in two groups of twenty-seven, soared into view. Seconds later, the planes—which were actually Japanese bombers—dropped their loads as they passed overhead. Immediately following the bomber assault, Japanese fighter planes flew in at low level and strafed the field.

There is no doubt the Commanding Generals in the Philippines knew long beforehand that war was inevitable for the United States. William Gentry, Communications Officer, had obtained equipment and set up a communications tent for several ham radio operators in the 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion. Gentry, states that minutes after the attack on Pearl Harbor, ham radio operators in Honolulu alerted the Philippines forces:

*The Commanding General of the post at Fort Stotsenburg was down at the communications tent for a very short time. And General Weaver was there.... reading the messages which we received.... The immediate reaction was, "Well, the war has started."*<sup>ix</sup>

Attacks earlier that morning in the northern part of the Philippine archipelago portended Japanese intentions of capturing the islands. Yet, instead of being dispersed as required in full war alert, all but one or two planes were conveniently lined in rows along the runway when the strike occurred. Combat tanks were positioned in the woods roughly fifty yards from the air strip to guard against Japanese paratroop landings. Full alert required constant manning of the equipment, but many crew members were not at their tanks. They were waiting for a "chow truck" to take them to a mess hall. Most senior officers were in conference at headquarters when the Japanese attacked Clark Field.

The initial onslaught lasted a little over an hour. The buildings and installations were in ruins except for headquarters. Only a handful of planes at Clark Field remained operable. Several soldiers had been killed and many others injured. Company D suffered one casualty and four wounded.

The first soldier killed in action in the Eastern Theater of Operations, United States Armored Forces in the Far East, was Private Robert H. Brooks from Scott County, Kentucky. Brooks was drafted into service at Cincinnati, Ohio, and processed at Fort Thomas, Kentucky, on 22 January 1941. He arrived at Fort Knox on 25 January where he was assigned to Company D. According to Maurice E. (Jack) Wilson, when the attack



Robert H. Brooks

on Clark Field occurred, Private Brooks was “sitting down in front of his tank looking up at the planes. As the bombs fell, the shrapnel cut the side of his face off and took part of his shoulder.”<sup>x</sup>

Major General Jacob L. Devers, Chief of the Armored Force, learning that Private Brooks was the first American casualty of the war, ordered the parade ground at Fort Knox named in honor of the deceased. A letter of condolence was sent to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Brooks, who were sharecroppers on a farm near Sadieville, in Scott County. Then the Army learned that the light-skinned Brooks was black and may have lied about his race when drafted. One member of Company D remembered thinking that Brooks was of Mediterranean descent.<sup>xi</sup> Had it been known that he was black, Brooks would not have been allowed to serve with the 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion as the armed forces were not yet integrated.

Preparations for the dedication of Brooks Field were well underway when General Devers was informed that Brooks was black. He promptly ordered that no aspect of the arrangements be changed. In his speech at the dedication ceremony, General Devers stated:

*For the preservation of America, the soldiers and sailors guarding our outposts are giving their lives. In death there is no grade or rank. And in this, the greatest Democracy the world has known, neither riches nor poverty, neither creed nor race draws a line of demarcation, in this hour of national crisis.*<sup>xii</sup>



The Pearl Harbor debacle has always overshadowed the catastrophic defeat suffered by the defense forces in the Philippine archipelago. Though the importance of the islands was significant and the loss of life tragic, the War Department decided early that Hitler posed the greatest threat and, at the urgings of Winston Churchill, adopted the principle of “Germany First.” The primary general war plan of the United States, Rainbow 5, conceded the loss of the Philippines before the first bomb was dropped.

The military defense plan for the Eastern Theater of Operations, Orange-3, set April 1942 as the earliest the Filipino-American forces could defend the Philippines. The primary weapons intended to prevent an air assault were B-17 heavy bombers many of which were located at Clark Field. In the event of a successful enemy air assault, ground units were to repel landings. The Armored Forces was the intended offensive ground force and, if it failed to repulse the landings, would fight delaying actions.

The province of Bataan, the key to controlling the Philippines, was to be held at all costs. This was no small task for a grossly undermanned, hastily trained, poorly armed force constantly in need of supplies, especially food and medicine. To compound matters, the American force was partnered with a Filipino Army whose situation was even more desperate. As a result of inadequate combat preparations and logistics, the Japanese Air Fleet, in a little more than an hour, dismantled the Armored Force, obliterated the Air Force, and negated all hope of successfully defending the Philippine Islands.<sup>xiii</sup> The only course left to the defending forces was to hold out as long as possible and delay the Japanese timetable.

After the air raids on Clark Field, the Armored Force moved a few miles from Fort Stotsenburg and bivouacked. The battalions were reorganized and the 192<sup>nd</sup> cut down to three letter companies; A, C, and D. Some Company D members were reassigned to Headquarters Company and went to Manila as operations personnel for General Wainwright. The remainder of the battalion moved to Mintinlupa, 15 miles south of Manila, remaining there until the Japanese landed in the north.

General Weaver divided the Filipino-American forces into the Northern Luzon Force and Southern Luzon Force. The 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion was the sole support of the Northern Luzon Force commanded by General Wainwright. They moved to the Lingayan Gulf vicinity on 22 December. The 194<sup>th</sup> Tank Battalion, sole support of the Southern Luzon Force, was sent to Lamon Bay on the east Coast of Luzon to help repel landings there. The two forces were directed to conduct delaying actions and make contact at San Fernando.<sup>xiv</sup>



The 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion was positioned south of Lingayan Gulf where the troops, hidden by mountains, watched Japanese ships unload men and equipment. The Armored Force had artillery in the mountains, but were under orders not to fire. The Japanese came ashore, and, in the words of Marcus Lawson, “From then on it was just more or less a hit and run affair,” in which the defense forces would, “pull up and get hit and then pull back and get away.”<sup>xv</sup> General MacArthur, Commander of the Eastern Theater of Operations, refused to send reinforcements to repel initial landings, opting to wait for the main landings.

Defensive positions were established according to the war plan. In the north the 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion fanned out to cover its sector with Company A on the west side, Company C on the east, and Company D covering the central perimeter.<sup>xvi</sup>

#### Toul Pocket, 15 February 1942



The Japanese had penetrated deep into the battle-worn Filipino-American Army on Bataan and General Wainwright ordered a counter attack to beat them back. The 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion, the 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry (Philippine Scouts), and men of the Philippine Army, storming through the dense jungle, wiped out the enemy pockets. They traded their blood and courage for two more vital months on Bataan. For this gallantry, despite great odds and a hopeless situation, the outfits engaged received the Distinguished Unit Citation. Department of the Army Poster No. 21-43 No. 7 1952 Painting by Stanley Dersh. This poster is no longer in use by the Army.

American forces found it difficult to destroy Japanese tanks because the sloping plates deflected armor-piercing ammunition. They quickly learned, however, that high explosive ammunition, which burst on impact, would disable the tanks.

From Rosario to Umingan, the 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion supported the 26<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, a group of Filipino scouts. The battalion fought rear guard actions, “cleaning out pockets” of Japanese machine gun and artillery emplacements. They retreated to San Quentin behind the D-2, or second defensive, position. The battalion fanned out in an effort to hold the line, but were spread so far apart they couldn’t communicate properly. They were directed to hold the D-2 position until the D-3 line was established, but lack of effective communication doomed the operation.<sup>xvii</sup>

The 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion was forced back to the D-3 line at San Jose, then retreated to Bongabon located midway between the D-3 and D-4 defensive lines. At Bongabon they engaged the Japanese, then fell back to Cabu, where they crossed the bridge at the D-4 line and destroyed it leaving the enemy on the other side, but only for a short time. The battalion withdrew to Cabanatuan where it discovered a stockpile of Japanese equipment. The tankers destroyed as much material as they could before retreating south down Route 5, the only highway to San Fernando, where they were to contact the Southern Luzon Force. Halting at Gapan near the D-5 line, the last defensive position before the Bataan peninsula, they were ordered to defend that line with every available resource.



The 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion fought continuously while moving back to Baliaug. A scouting patrol found a railroad bridge that had not been destroyed. This was the only point at which the Japanese could cross the river. The battalion positioned itself at the

south end of the bridge and waited for the Japanese to concentrate their tanks and troops at the north end. When a large force gathered, the battalion planned to open fire in a surprise attack.

On 31 December, the Japanese discovered the bridge and assembled at its head. Infantrymen crossed first followed by engineers who had to lay planks across the railroad tracks before the Japanese tanks could cross. The enemy spotted an American officer as he drove up and stopped in front of a house where the commanding officer of the 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion was hidden. The battalion commander told the officer about the operation in progress and ordered him to get back into his jeep and drive off quickly. Knowing the Japanese would send a scouting party to the house, the tankers could not delay their attack.

While the enemy was distracted by the activity at the house, a platoon crept behind the Japanese and positioned itself to cut off a retreat. When the platoon was in position, the tankers opened fire, completely surprising the Japanese. The enemy retreated, into the fire of the platoon behind them. American forces at Baliaug completely routed the Japanese without suffering a casualty.

The battalion moved to Calumpit. They found that the Calumpit Bridge, the only way across the Pampanga River, had been blown up by a retreating American force. The Japanese were closing in and they had to act quickly. Moving north, they set up defensive positions near some rice paddies. Knowing the Japanese would attack at night, the battalion positioned its tanks one hundred yards apart. The men planned to direct their first round of fire at the dried rice stalks lying around the field. The stalks would ignite and light up the field, yielding enough light for them to see the enemy. The troops intentionally made noise to lure the Japanese into the trap.

The plan worked. As soon as the Japanese were in position, the tankers opened fire, fighting successfully against a superior force until they ran out of ammunition and had to retreat to the town of Porac. It was a hasty retreat because the Japanese were about to seize San Fernando and Route 3, the only road the tanks could take to Bataan. Along the way, the battalion found a Filipino platoon pinned down by Japanese artillery. Locating the three artillery pieces, the tankers destroyed them, forcing the Japanese to disperse. The Filipino and American soldiers gave chase and, "Took care of as much infantry as they could."<sup>xviii</sup>

The 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion then pulled back to the Formosa Bridge. After the Northern Luzon Force troops had crossed, the battalion completed its crossing and destroyed the bridge. The Japanese were not delayed long. The 192<sup>nd</sup> tankers were positioned to cut off a Japanese offensive expected to come around the mountain. Instead, forces came over the mountain,



TANK CAMAFLOUGED - BATAAN P.I.

surprising the Filipino-American troops and breaking the defensive line.

Throughout the operations, the Japanese had replaced weary and wounded troops with fresh soldiers at will. American forces could not. As the campaign wore on, the loss of American soldiers became increasingly critical. The same was true of logistics. Early on, the Japanese had cut American supply lines and materiel could not reach the troops. As shortages of replacement parts for equipment became severe, rumors spread that troops were under orders to limit weapons fire.<sup>xix</sup>

In Bataan, the 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion was assigned to beach defense. At this point, food shortages were taking a toll on the troops. They had been reduced to half-rations soon after the war began, but many soldiers did not get that much food. The troops became so hungry they ate all of the 26<sup>th</sup> Cavalry's horses and then the pack mules. The weakening of troops due to lack of food was compounded by the presence of disease-carrying mosquitoes; quinine for malaria was not available. Prevalent ills among the Philippines defenders were dysentery, diarrhea, and beriberi. In the weeks before capitulation, more American casualties resulted from starvation and disease than from Japanese infantry or artillery.

## Surrender, the Death March and Years of Captivity

In early April the Japanese sensed the American forces were in serious trouble and increased troop strength in preparation for a final offensive. There was a pause in the action while the Japanese reorganized, but the desperate condition of the Filipino-American forces prevented them from launching an offensive of their own. On the rainy night of 5 April 1942, the Japanese made "the big push," breaking the last line of defense down the center of the east and west sectors. On 9 April, after four months of fighting against overwhelming odds, the Filipino-American forces had no choice but to surrender Bataan. Before falling in to surrender, they destroyed their supplies and equipment.

The Japanese timetable had called for the capture of the Philippines in fifty days. Because of the tenacity and ingenuity of the Filipino-American forces, it took them twice as long. Their stand lasted from 8 December 1941 to 9 April 1942. It has been hypothesized that they could have defended the islands indefinitely had they not run out of food and medicine.<sup>xx</sup>



Filipino-American soldiers were ordered to surrender and warned that escape was considered desertion. Believing the Japanese had no intention of taking prisoners, several members of Company D risked an escape to Corregidor. They decided that if they were going to be killed by the Japanese they were going to die fighting.

Corregidor was the next Japanese objective. Believing the offensive to capture the fortress island could not begin until all Americans were removed from Bataan, an evacuation plan was devised. Prisoners were assembled at Camp Cavin, an old Filipino Army camp near Mariveles, and held for three days and nights with no food or water. Then they marched 25 miles east to Balanga, the central gathering point. The Japanese

believed the evacuation could be completed in two days, but they underestimated the prisoners' numbers and poor physical condition and the march lasted from 9-23 April. At Balanga prisoners were divided into groups of 75 to 100 men then marched 90 miles to Camp O'Donnell on the trek known as the "Bataan Death March."<sup>xxi</sup>



While American prisoners in Bataan were struggling to survive, soldiers on Corregidor were trying to hold off Japanese incursions. Company D escapees first went to one of many tunnels used as shelters, but were promptly assigned to beach defense. Some Company D members were attached to a Marine Corps unit and sent to Monkey Point, where the Japanese had landed and fighting had been heaviest. Others volunteered to go to Fort Drum, a concrete fortress in Manila Bay. All fought bravely, but on 6 May 1942 the forces on Corregidor and Fort Drum were forced to capitulate.

While all prisoners of war suffered at the hands of the Japanese, some fared better than others. Several Kentucky National Guardsmen remained in Bataan after the surrender. Of those, some endured the death march and some did not. Prisoners from Corregidor were not forced to walk the 90 miles to Camp O'Donnell. Instead they rode trains. Some of the men from Harrodsburg became ill before surrender and were confined to a hospital. About half of the original Kentucky Guardsmen sent to the Philippines in 1941 returned home. According to Jack Wilson, none of the original members of the 38<sup>th</sup> Tank Company were killed in action. Instead, casualties among the Mercer Countians resulted from starvation and disease endemic to POW camps.



How the prisoners fared on the death march depended largely on the characters of the Japanese guards supervising their group. Some of the guards were humane and compassionate; however, according to the testimonies of many survivors, most were brutal. William Gentry, one of the "Harrodsburg boys" who participated in the death march, recalled that it took his group two weeks to get from Camp Cavin to Camp O'Donnell. The guards marched them at night. During the day the prisoners were forced to sit in the hot tropical sun without their hats. Gentry estimates that he was allowed seven canteens of water, about seven quarts, and, "One ball of rice about the size of a baseball," for the entire eleven-day trek.<sup>xxii</sup>

Cecil Vandiver, a Kentucky National Guardsman, describes his experience on the death march:

*And then they took us and lined us up and started marching us out....And we walked. They would let us rest maybe five minutes out of every hour....As we was*

*marching up the road, they would promise us food at the next stop....I went three days and nights without any food or water. And my mouth swelled up and my tongue bursted open and I couldn't hardly talk. Finally, when we came to water, they'd post guards around the water holes and fight us off. They wouldn't let us get it. Finally, I spotted a well and broke line and caught about half a canteen and just when I turned it up to take a drink, a Jap guard hit me with a rifle butt and knocked me down and knocked the canteen out of my hand and spilt all the water out.*<sup>xxiii</sup>

Vandiver was fortunate. Most who broke line for any reason were either shot or bayoneted on the spot. In concluding his recollections he says, "It was just like a nightmare. I can't remember the number of days we walked or anything. It just seems like a dream or something. I can't remember."<sup>xxiv</sup>



**Cecil Vandiver**

Charles Reed marched only to the first camp. There he fell unconscious from malarial fever and was taken to a hospital. Reed remembered the hospital:

*After staying in there one night, the next morning I woke up. Around eighty of the hundred fifty that were there were dead. So I crawled out of that hospital. They had a detail of six hundred men go out on bridge construction work and I got into that bunch. And as they loaded up, they put me in that truck also.*<sup>xxv</sup>

Just before the surrender of Bataan, Kentucky Guardsman Ralph Stine contracted malaria and entered an army field hospital located approximately five miles from Corregidor. The Japanese fenced off the hospital, placed artillery around it, and began shelling the island across the bay. Artillerymen on Fort Drum returned fire unaware that their shells would land so near a hospital filled with American soldiers. Some shells hit the hospital killing and wounding several Americans.<sup>xxvi</sup>

Marcus Lawson, a member of Company D, was at Monkey Point on Corregidor fighting with a marine unit. He recalled the surrender of the island: "We saw [General] Wainwright when he came out [of the tunnel where he tendered the surrender]. He was crying, saluted us all."<sup>xxvii</sup> The prisoners were searched and their valuables taken. Then they were marched to a "big concrete yard" which was actually a Filipino Army ordnance warehouse. Held there for three days and nights, they were given no food or water. In the middle of the fourth night, a Japanese guard awakened them and permitted them to get some water from a tap. Their only nourishment was scavenged from a "chow pit" of food discarded by Japanese soldiers.



John Elsmore Sadler was one of the Kentucky National Guardsmen who volunteered to go to Fort Drum. He recalled that the soldiers on the concrete ship shared clothing, food, and medical supplies with the arrivals from Corregidor. The heavy artillery positioned on Fort Drum made it a primary target for Japanese aerial attacks. Bombers often missed the small target and their bombs exploded in the water. “Then the boys would all jump out in the water and pick up the fish they’d killed and we’d have a big fish fry.... And then as everything happens,” he concluded, “they pulled a surrender.”<sup>xxviii</sup>

After the surrender, the Japanese boarded Fort Drum and searched the prisoners. Sadler relates how he lost his shoes:

*I had a pretty pair of shoes on. They was really shining. A Jap kept looking at them. He took a liking to them right now. I’d move around a little and he’d move around pretty close to me. Finally, he motioned at his shoes and mine. I told him “No, too little.” He said he’d fix. So he cut the end out where my foot would stick out over the shoe.”<sup>xxix</sup>*

The prisoners from Fort Drum were taken to Corregidor and held with the others. Jack Wilson, another Kentuckian who escaped to Corregidor, remembers that on the fourth day of imprisonment a senior officer was given a wheelbarrow and told he could get water from a nearby creek. The creek ran through the residential district of Corregidor. The Filipinos dumped their waste into this creek so it would be carried to the ocean. The prisoners tried to purify the water with chlorine as it was the only source of water permitted them. Wilson says they were given food that same day. Each man was issued one can of American “C” rations, biscuits, coffee, and a piece of hard candy. Thereafter, they received one can of rations for every two men and a small quantity of rice.<sup>xxx</sup>

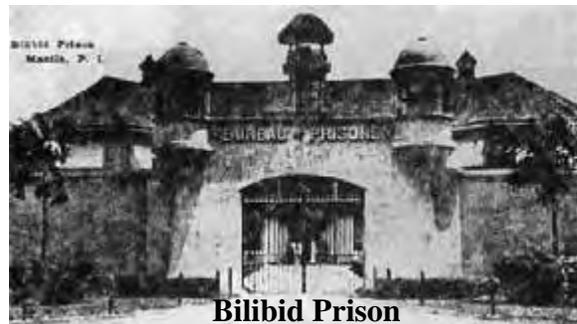
After a week Sadler and other prisoners were taken to an abandoned sugar plantation to rebuild a concrete dock the Japanese wanted to use as a runway. Another man from Harrodsburg, Joe Riley Anness, was assigned to a work detail taking boatloads of supplies from Fort Drum to Corregidor.<sup>xxxi</sup>

After two weeks of captivity on Corregidor, the prisoners were shipped to Luzon. The ship could not anchor near land. The prisoners had to wade to shore. Some from Company D could not swim. They struggled to shore, usually with the help of a friend. They were marched through the streets of Manila to Bilibid Prison, the “Walled City.”

The prisoners remained at Bilibid for a few days before being transported to Camp O’Donnell. They were subjected to a train ride similar to the one their compatriots in the death march had suffered. The gauge of track used in the Philippines was smaller than that used in the United States and,



**Joe Riley Anness**



**Bilibid Prison**

consequently, the railroad cars were smaller. Like those evacuated earlier from Bataan, the prisoners were herded into boxcars, 75 to 100 men per car. They were packed so tightly that a man passing out had nowhere to fall; the others simply held him up. Many prisoners suffered from diarrhea and dysentery. Once in the boxcar, the door was shut and they were locked inside for the remainder of the journey. Men defecated standing among others in the unventilated railroad car.

The train stopped at a depot some twenty miles from the prison camps. The captives spent an unsheltered rainy night at an abandoned schoolhouse. The next morning they marched to Cabanatuan where the Japanese had converted a Filipino Army post into prison camps. The “Harrodsburg boys” were held in Camps #1 and #3. Those who had escaped to Corregidor were reunited with their fellow Kentuckians who had survived the death march.

According to Joe Anness, prisoners in Camp #3 fared much better than those in Camp #1. “Camp #1 in four months time lost 2,600 men. Died from starvation, dysentery, and malaria fever, and everything else that goes along with prison life,” adding, “In the same period of time at Camp #3, we lost only 72 men.”<sup>xxxii</sup>

The prisoners at Cabanatuan were sent on work details to various sites and assigned a variety of duties. Many repaired air strips destroyed by Japanese bombers at the outbreak of the war. Others repaired roadways and bridges.

A few men from Company D became seriously ill and were transferred to a hospital. The most common illnesses were malaria and dry beriberi, caused by a vitamin deficiency resulting from malnutrition. Prisoners needing medical treatment were generally sent to Bilibid Prison, which had been converted into a makeshift hospital by the Japanese. Upon recovery, prisoners were immediately released from the hospital and returned to their work details.

Prisoners volunteered for any work detail they could get because the rule was, “No work, no food.” One Kentuckian relates:

*We could go out on work details, if you was lucky enough to get one. And for that you got a bun about two inches square. The food was poor. You got pumpkin soup and a little rice.... [T]he rice was full of worms. When I first started getting this, we would save most of it 'til night and eat it after dark so we couldn't see the worms in it.*<sup>xxxiii</sup>

Another prisoner agreed that the two small meals per day could not sate the appetites of the prisoners or improve their health. The men took full advantage of opportunities to get additional nourishment. Once they cooked and ate a cat that wandered into the prison compound. They sucked the marrow from bones and made soup from carrot and sweet potato tops discarded by the Japanese guards. “It was pretty rough,” according to Jack Wilson:

*I knew one boy got his Red Cross box and he sat there and eat the whole thing up. And there he laid dead the next morning. His stomach was small and he just wasn't used to eating. And he had overdone himself eating that ten or twelve pounds of food that was in that Red Cross box. And he was laying there dead the next morning.*<sup>xxxiv</sup>

Wilson admitted having trouble eating some of the food that was issued—especially grasshoppers, an oriental delicacy. The insects were cured in a salty sauce and two teaspoons a day were given to the prisoners. Eating them was difficult, he said, because “The little fuzz on that grasshopper’s legs, after it was dried up, it was just like steel wool. It would tear your throat all up.” Snails, also an oriental delicacy, were occasionally given to the prisoners. “It’s a certain way you can open a snail and it pulls the mud out from the meat,” Wilson says, “but I never could find out how you separate it. And by the time you eat five or six of them, your mouth would be all full of mud and taste muddy.”<sup>xxxv</sup>

William Gentry was assigned to a work detail on a farm on Mindanao Island for eighteen months planting and cultivating rice. Knowing that the food they were producing was feeding Japanese soldiers, Gentry admits that the prisoners’ “sole purpose” was to, “Sabotage this rice any way we could.” They dropped the paddies in the mud and trampled them. They never filled the baskets to capacity and, “Made sure the thrasher blew as much out in the chaff stack as possible.” Stacks of rice were left out in the rain to mold. At the mills prisoners stacked rice piles twenty to thirty feet high then poked holes in the roof of the warehouse so rain would leak in and ruin the grain. As to their success Gentry concludes, “In the eighteen months we were down there, they were only able to take a truck or a truck-load-and-a-half of rice out of the place.”<sup>xxxvi</sup> Gentry was transferred to a hemp plantation where he says the prisoners intentionally built flaws into the ropes they made for the Japanese.

The Japanese transferred most prisoners of war to camps in Japan and Manchuria. Those transferred to Manchuria in 1942 recalled arriving during the winter wearing clothes that were threadbare. Many died from exposure shortly after arrival. The ground was frozen so solidly that the dead could not be buried. The guards permitted them enough lumber to allow one prisoner, who was a carpenter, to build coffins in which to store the bodies until they could be buried.

The prisoners were issued only one bucket of coal per day to warm a 1,500 man barracks. To avoid freezing to death, they posted lookouts to watch the guards. After guard rounds, prisoners sneaked into the warehouse, took a body from a coffin, and placed it in a coffin with another body. They returned to the barracks with the empty coffin, broke it up, and used it for fuel.

The prisoners worked in a factory three miles from the camp. They walked to and from work every day. The scarcity of food was a constant problem for all prisoners of war; if a cat or a dog ran into the line, someone would grab it, cook it, and eat it.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Lieutenant Edwin Rue was an “able bodied” man transferred to Japan. “Strange as it may seem,” says Rue, “after arriving at Manila on Thanksgiving Day 1941, I landed in ... Japan on Thanksgiving Day 1942.”<sup>xxxviii</sup> Although he traveled to Japan with others from his unit, he was not held with them because he was assigned to a camp for officers. Like their compatriots in Manchuria, many American prisoners of war arrived in Japan in the middle of winter. Rue estimated that one-third died from exposure. As for Rue, he suffered from dry beriberi. He relates how he survived his ordeal:

*At first, it seemed the only relief was to spend the night walking back and forth until about five o'clock in the morning, we'd be able to lay down. Then when we were unable to walk, we layed head to foot and rubbed each*

*others feet. Then it became so severe, one couldn't stand to have anything touch the feet at all. During that time, it was difficult even to live. But we seemed somehow to exist and wear it out before it wore us out. In other cases, men were inclined to give up a little bit. But it was up to each person to take care of himself and do as much as he could for his buddy, the other prisoners.*<sup>xxix</sup>

One Mercer County man described his trip to Japan as, "The roughest ride I think anybody could ever take." The prisoners were crowded into the hold of the ships. Meals consisted of "green" meat, rice that had been swept off the floor, and soup containing a, "Little piece of meat floating in a canteen cup of water."<sup>xl</sup>

The ships were so crowded that one Kentuckian, on his way to Manchuria, remembered having to sleep on the stairs. "And finally, next night I made it down underneath and found a bed down there. Got in between two other guys. Two guys laying on each side of me the next morning dead. And another just a little piece further. They was dying like flies."<sup>xli</sup> These vessels were often referred to as "hell ships" because so many passengers died from unsanitary, overcrowded conditions and lack of food and medicine.

On another ship the Japanese guards celebrated the return home by getting drunk. During the celebration they vomited and urinated on the prisoners below them.

The American Navy unwittingly increased the hazards of the journey to Japan during the latter part of the war. American submarines on patrol were unaware Americans were aboard several ships they torpedoed. Ships frequently were forced to stop in Formosa (Taiwan). Sometimes they remained a week. Prisoners were not permitted to leave the ship's holds. When layovers were extended, prisoners were assigned work, usually planting vegetable gardens.

Generally, the prison camps in Japan and Manchuria were as rough as those in the Philippines. Sanitary conditions were poor, food scarce, medical care limited if available, and the labor hard. Upon arrival, prisoners were divided into groups of ten. Each man was compelled to sign an acknowledgement stating that if any of the ten escaped the others would be executed. Apprehended escapees were also executed. According to some captives, prison guards were less brutal in Japan, although treatment varied from camp to camp. Many learned to gage the war's conduct by the treatment they received. When things were going well for the Japanese brutality declined, but when events favored allied forces violence increased and intensified.<sup>xlii</sup>

Not all prisoners of war in Japan fared well. Joe Anness was held in a camp where brutality occurred daily. He worked in a copper mine. "Late in the afternoon, about five or six o'clock, we'd climb back up the 457 stairs [leading out of the mine] and have to walk approximately three mile back to our camp. Now here a lot of men were treated extremely cruel. If they didn't work good during the day, they were beaten with pick handles at night time." Recounting a personal incident of brutality Anness states:

*One particular night, about twelve o'clock...I went to the mess hall to try and get a cup of water for my headache....One of the Jap guards grabbed me there and marched me over to the guardhouse where all the guards...had come out to slap me or beat me or kick me or*

*something...Finally, after about an hour of this treatment...one of our own American officers that was stationed at the camp with me happened along. And he told [the guards] that I had to work the next day. So the sergeant of the guards said that, "We'll beat him up a little more and, if he has to work tomorrow, he'd better get some rest. Better put him to bed." So after some of this maltreatment of an hour, hour-and-a-half, I was released to go to bed so I could work the next day.*<sup>xliii</sup>

Anness went to work the next morning with two black eyes, bruised arms, and a sore head.

A Kentucky Guardsman was told not to whistle in the mines because the mine god enjoyed music so much that, when hearing it, he forgot to hold up the roof. Actually, sound vibrations could cause the roof to collapse and kill all inside. They also had to bow to the mine god upon entering and exiting.<sup>xliv</sup>

Some prisoners worked in mills and factories under civilian control. Once, prisoners laboring in a steel mill were treated so badly the military intervened. Under care of the Japanese Army, food allotment was increased, medical care was provided, and the men were allowed to rest themselves. When they were healthy again, they were returned to the civilians.<sup>xlv</sup>

The Japanese performed medical experiments. One man from Harrodsburg lost his sight as a result of dry beriberi. Confined to a hospital, he was given a variety of medicines which he continued to take even though experimental because he did not get sick. Later he was taken to a prison camp by the Sea of Japan where he was made to unload the ships. On one occasion, the cargo included bombs. The prisoners refused to unload it. Japanese guards beat them with baseball bats, but the prisoners did not unload the ship.<sup>xlvi</sup>

## **Liberation and Return Home**

The Japanese surrendered in August 1945 after atomic bombs were dropped on the cities of Hiroshima and Saki. John Sadler was in a camp near Nagasaki and recounted the dropping of the second bomb:

*I was in the mess hall and they dropped that bomb. And at first we thought it was an earthquake, but she came with such a roar. And the window lights flew out of the building. And she [the building] swung way over, looked like a forty degree angle, but then she straightened back up. So we got outside and got to looking and saw an awful toadstool across the bay. And it towered up there, I guess about 4,500 feet high...[T]hat night, that old Jap [a soldier who had befriended Sadler] gave me that information [as he] walked along by me going to the mine. He told me the Americans had a new weapon and it wouldn't be long before I'd be going home. And Nagasaki*

*was just like that highway; everything was just as level. It killed and burnt the whole city, one shell of some sort.*<sup>xlvii</sup>

After the surrender, Sadler went to Nagasaki, “To see what that bomb did to that city.”

*...[y]ou could pick up a rock in your bare hand and just crumble it to powder. And Pullman cars was laying five and six blocks from the railroad tracks. There wasn't anything you couldn't break with your hand or a pipe....And there would be people sitting in foxholes; there'd be their carcass sitting up there, that never had fallen over, with all the meat gone off it.*<sup>xlviii</sup>

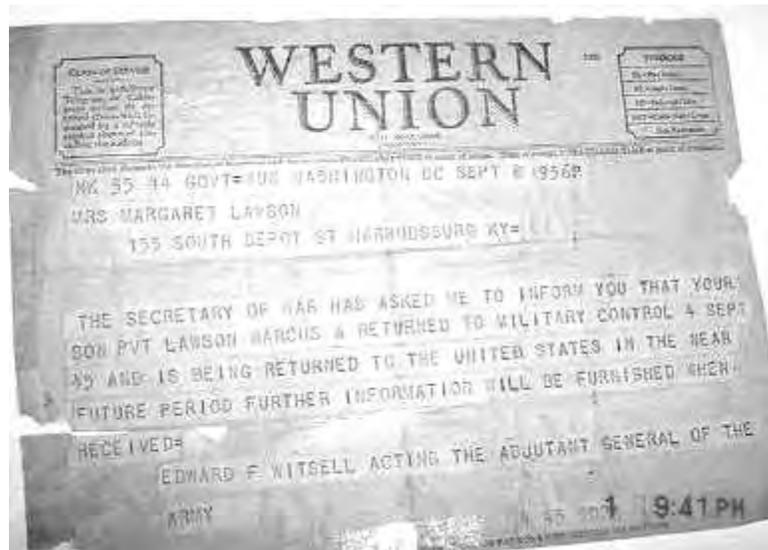


Guards did not inform prisoners of the surrender. On the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup>, they were told that they did not have to work because it was a “holiday.” The prisoners did not believe that. They had never had a holiday.

The good news spread rapidly. Soon prisoners learned the war was over and quickly moved to take over the prison camps. They disarmed the Japanese, then painted “PW” on barracks roofs to attract American Navy planes. Airplanes dropped barrels of food, clothing, and medical supplies. Prisoners received instructions to wait until liberated. After forty months of captivity many could not wait. All in Japan went to the coast to American hospital ships. Healthier men were flown to the Philippines, then to San Francisco, California.

In Manchuria, prisoners were liberated by troops, flown to china, to the Philippines, then to San Francisco.

Some were not evacuated from the Philippines before the Allied invasion. William Gentry suffered from dysentery and was too ill. He says, “There were six hundred of us left in Camp #1 when the invasion come on Luzon and the group

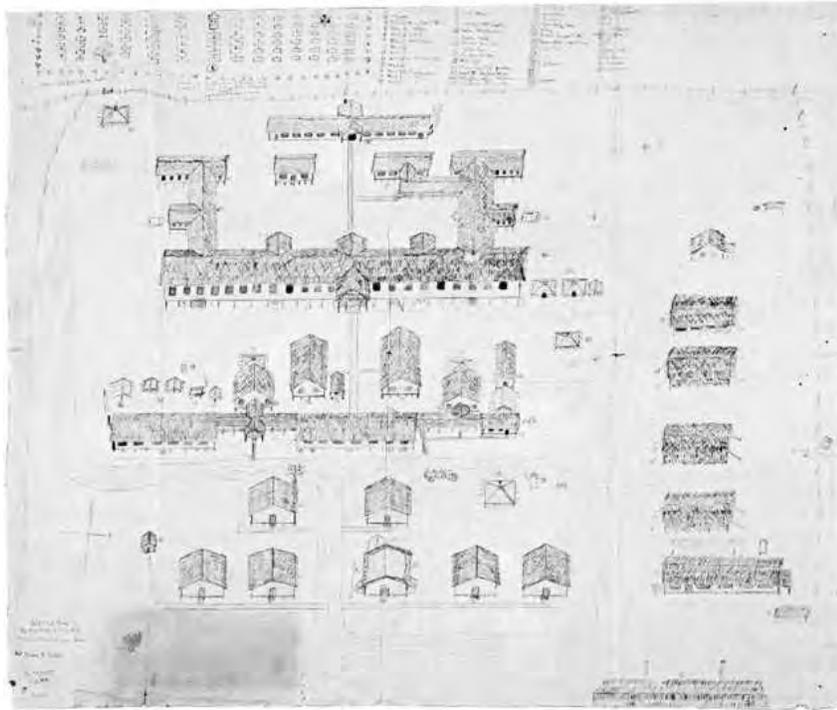


was liberated by the Ranger Battalion.”<sup>xlix</sup>

Sixty-six soldiers from Company D went to the Philippines in November 1941. Thirty-seven returned in 1946. They were provided with extensive medical treatment for extended periods of time after the return. Most accepted military discharges. Some served in Korea. Grover Whittinghill said, “I was a prisoner of war 1,249 days. I made that death march, but I wouldn’t go through it again for all the money in the world.”<sup>l</sup>

The valiant efforts of the Filipino-American forces did not go unacknowledged. Commendations and awards were issued to them. Two citations were issued from the War Department to the Provisional Tank Group, including the 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion. The first was for outstanding performance of duty covering the withdrawal of the Luzon Forces into the Bataan Peninsula from 6 January to 8 March 1942. “This group was charged with the support of the I and II Philippine Corps, the cordon of defense of the coasts of Bataan, and the defense of three major landing fields.” The tankers were credited with preventing, “[A] projected landing of airborne and paratroop enemy, as well as several abortive thrusts across Manila Bay, any one of which would have meant early disaster in Bataan.” The citation continued, “Under constant air attack, these units, despite heavy losses in men and materiel, maintained a magnificent defense and through their ability, courage, and devotion to duty contributed in large measure to the prolonged defense of the Bataan Peninsula.”<sup>li</sup>

The other citation honored the tankers for taking, “Battle positions on 1 December in the vicinity of Clark Field and Fort Stotsenburg, from which it fought a notable action in the defense of these critical points in the initial hostile attack.” In the performance of its duty, the 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion was, “Constantly in the field, covering the supporting four divisions of the Northern Luzon Force... [contributing] most vitally in all stages and under extraordinary handicaps to the protraction of the operations and the successful withdrawal.” They were the last unit out of Northern Luzon, and the last into the Bataan Peninsula, on 7 January 1942.<sup>lii</sup>



Birds eye view of the Headquarters & Hospital Center, Hospital #1 at Camp O'Donnell drawn by Technical Sergeant Harold G. Yunker on January 18, 1943: Camp O'Donnell was a former Philippine Army training center that the Japanese estimated would hold as many as thirty thousand prisoners or "captives." However, twice that number would be crowded into the now barbed-wire enclosed facility which would quickly run rampant with malaria and dysentery. Couple this with cruel treatment and near starvation of the American and Filipino captives by their guards and Camp O'Donnell would quickly become a death trap. In just three short months of operations an estimated 35,000 Filipinos and nearly 6,000 Americans would die.

In January 1943, because of the extremely horrible conditions at Camp O'Donnell, the Japanese began making preparations to relocate the surviving captives to a larger facility at Cabanatuan. This move prompted Sergeant Yunker to produce this map as a record of the original camp's hospital area. However, knowing that possession of such a document meant certain death, should it be discovered, the map was placed in a tin "coffee" can and buried near the Headquarters structure on January 23<sup>rd</sup> when the remaining hospital staff were marched away from the camp.

Following the war, Alvin Poweleit returned to the site of Camp O'Donnell, recovered the map, and later donated it to the Military Records and Research Branch, Kentucky Department of Military Affairs.<sup>liii</sup>

**THE HARRODSBURG TANKERS**  
**Company D, 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion,**  
**Harrodsburg's Kentucky Guardsmen**  
**Who Returned Following Captivity**

**Edwin Wilson Rue**

Edwin W. "Skip" Rue joined the 38th Tank Company in 1934 as a Private along with his brother Arch. Skip became an officer at Fort Knox. He began the Death March at Balanga in the south of Bataan. He was put onto a train at San Fernando to Capas for the walk to Camp O'Donnell arriving some five days after beginning the journey. He was transferred to Cabanatuan. Sent to Japan on the Nagato Maru. Held at Zentsuji in Japan and worked as a stevedore in the rail yards of the Port of Takamasu. In June 1945, was sent to Rokushi Camp. After he was liberated, he was promoted to Major and returned to Harrodsburg and ran his own business and eventually moving to Lexington. He died on November 28, 2004.



**Claude L. Yeast**

Cpl. Claude L. Yeast joined the 38<sup>th</sup> Tank Company prior to the federalization in the fall of 1940 with his brother Willard. Made his way to Corregidor by boat. Taken prisoner May 6, 1942 when the island fortress was surrendered. Claude remained on the island for almost two weeks. then marched through Manila and on to Bilibid Prison for three days and then to Cabanatuan #3 for some five months and then moved back to Manila by train. Put on the ship Tottori Maru and onto Pusan, Korea. From Pusan, put on a train and taken north to Manchuria and camp at Mukden, Manchuria. Worked in a machine shop. After some 18 months sent to Japan and Kamioka #1-B POW Camp where he worked in the Zinc mine running a jackhammer. Claude returned to Harrodsburg.



**William Gentry**

1st Lt. William H. Gentry joined the Harrodsburg Guard unit sometime between 1934 and 1936. Became an officer at Fort Knox and assigned to Headquarters Company and eventually was assigned to C Company. It was at Baluag that Gentry's platoon of tanks won the first tank victory of World War II against enemy tanks on December 31, 1941. On the 11th of April 1942, Gentry and the other members of C Company became Prisoner of Wars. They made their way to Mariveles where they would begin the death march. It took him eleven days to complete the march. Suffering from malaria, Gentry was carried for three or four days during the march by his fellow tankers. In particular, 2nd Lt. Jacques Merrifield of B Company carried Gentry most of this time. First held at Camp O'Donnell and then on



June 6, 1942 when he was sent to Cabanatuan. In October 1942, he was sent to the Philippine Experimental Farm on the Island of Mindanao where he worked on a rice farm. In June 1944 he was returned to Manila by ship and then to Cabanatuan. On the night of January 30, 1945, Gentry and the other prisoners were liberated when Rangers of the United States Army raided Cabanatuan. Gentry and the other liberated POWs were lead through enemy lines to American lines. Gentry eventually returned to Harrodsburg and he passed away in April 2000.

## **Grover C. Brummett**

Pvt. Grover C. Brummett joined the Kentucky National Guard in Harrodsburg in June of 1940. During the Battle of Luzon, he is credited with shooting down two Japanese Zeros and a reconnaissance plane. He became a prisoner on April 9, 1942 and began the Death March at Mariveles. It took fourteen days for him to complete the march. First held at Camp O'Donnell where he worked on the burial detail. He also spent time at Camp 8 and then sent to Manila where he worked as a stevedore loading and unloading 55 gallon drums from ships. Later sent to Bilibid Prison. Put aboard the Nagato Maru in November 1942 for a 17 day voyage to Japan where he was put to work building a dam at Mitsushima and eventually transferred to a carbide plant. Then transferred to Narumi Camp working to produce wheels for the Nippon Wheel Manufacturing Company and were liberated by American forces on September 4, 1945. He returned to the United States in late October, 1945. He passed away in February 2002, in Louisville.



## **Maurice E. “Jack” Wilson**

Staff Sergeant Maurice E. Wilson joined the Harrodsburg unit before it was federalized in 1940. He did not take part in the Louisiana maneuvers because he was hospitalized at Fort Knox with an eye injury. He was finally allowed to rejoin his unit as they prepared for overseas duty. During the Battle of Bataan, he was reassigned from a tank commander to a mess sergeant because his commanding officer worried that if he got something in his good eye, he would be unable to command his tank. As a mess sergeant, he attempted to feed the men of D Company with anything he could find. When the order came for the Filipino and American forces on Bataan to surrender, he and fifteen other members of the company attempted to escape to Australia but instead wound up on Corregidor. He volunteered to go to Ft. Drum and became a member of a gun crew. He was taken prisoner on May 6, 1941 and marched to Bilibid Prison and eventually by train to Cabanatuan POW Camp #3. He was sent on a work detail to build runways at Nickols Field and later returned to Bilibid Prison because of illness and eventually back to Cabanatuan. He was put aboard the Taga Maru sailing for Japan in September 1943 where he worked as a stevedore. His legs were severely injured in a fall while there. He returned to the United States by ship almost four years to the day that he had sailed for the Philippines. He returned to Harrodsburg and wore leg braces for the rest of his life. He passed away on May 2, 1985.



## Morris S. Collier

Sgt. Maurice Stanland Collier joined the Harrodsburg unit before it was federalized in 1940. He was held prisoner in Cabanatuan and was put aboard the Hell Ship Canadian Inventor and was sent to Japan and worked in coal mining at Omine Machi. He was liberated in September 1945. He died 13 November 1993 in Nicholasville.



## Joe Anness

Staff Sergeant Joseph Riley Anness, Jr. joined the Harrodsburg unit in 1934. His nephew Elzie Annes was also a member of the unit. At Fort Knox he was assigned to supplies for Company D. He escaped to Corregidor when they learned of the order to surrender. He volunteered to go to Ft. Drum where he was assigned to load the big gun. He was captured on May 6, 1942. He was taken by boat to Manila and eventually to Bilibid Prison and later to sent to Cabanatuan Camp #3. He was on a work detail at Nichols Field. He was later sent to Camp Murphy and again building runways. He was put aboard the Hell Ship Noto Maru and sent to Moji, Japan and on to camp Sendai #6 where he worked in a copper mine belonging to Mitsubishi. He was liberated in September 1945. He remained in the military after World War II and retired as a Staff Sergeant. He died on 1 July 1976.



## James W. Durr

Private James William Durr joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime before they were federalized in November 1940. He became a Prisoner of War on 9 April 1941 and was on the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell, Cabanatuan #1, and Bilibid Prison. He worked as a laborer in a ship yard in Kawasaki Japan. He died on 25 November 1972.



## Morgan French

Sgt. Morgan French was one of the original members of the Harrodsburg unit. His brother Edward was also a member. At Ft. Knox he became the crew chief of the maintenance section of company D. French escaped to Corregidor and Ft. Drum. He was taken prisoner on May 10<sup>th</sup> 1942. He was taken by boat to an area near Manila and eventually on to Bilibid Prison and Cabanatuan. He was put aboard the Hell Ship Nagato Maru for transport to Japan. He worked building a dry dock and later in a graphite mine and camps at Tanagawa and Tsuruga where he



worked as a stevedore. He saw the mushroom cloud at Nagasaki from where he was being held. He was officially liberated on September 10, 1945. He eventually returned to Harrodsburg after the war. He remained in the military working as an instructor at Fort Knox until his retirement. He now lives in Texas and is the last surviving Kentucky National Guardsman from Company D.

## Lyle C. Harlow

Private Lyle Collins Harlow joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime before it was activated in November 1940. He became a prisoner of war on 9 April 1942 and was part of the Death March. He was held at POW Camps Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan #1 and was later sent to Japan where he worked on the docks as a stevedore and was held at Camp Nagoya #9. He was liberated in September 1945. He died on 12 May 1984.



## Kenneth M. Hourigan

Private Kenneth Mason Hourigan joined the Harrodsburg Kentucky National Guard unit sometime before it was activated in November 1940. He heard the order to surrender over the radio in his tank but were able to eventually make their way to Corregidor. He was taken prisoner on May 6 1942 and eventually taken by boat to near Manila and marched to Bilibid Prison and eventually on to Cabanatuan #3. He was later sent to Japan and a camp near Osaka and worked in a steel mill. He was sent to Nagoya #9 and worked as a stevedore on the docks of Iwase. He returned to Harrodsburg and became a police officer. He passed away on February 19, 2000.



## Stanley H. Kyler

Private Stanley Hardin Kyler enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime before the unit was activated in November 1940. He became a prisoner of war on 9 April 1941 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell, Cabanatuan #1, Bilibid Prison. He was put aboard the Hell Ship Clyde Maru and sent to Moji, Japan and was held at Fukuoka #17. He was liberated in September 1945 and eventually returned to Kentucky and died 15 May 1992.



## William C. Alford

Sergeant William Clinton Alford joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit in July 1939 at the age of 17. He was assigned to the Battalion Headquarters reconnaissance platoon. He became a prisoner of war on April 9, 1942 and began the



Death March at Mariveles. At San Fernando they were put on a train to Capas and was marched to Camp O'Donnell. He was sent on a work detail back to Bataan to cut up scrap metal and six months later to a motor pool in Manila and eventually to Cabanatuan #1. He was put aboard the Hell Ship Canadian Inventor and eventually arrived in Moji, Japan where he was sent to Fukuoka #5 where he worked in a coal mine. Alford arrived in San Francisco on November 2, 1945. He later moved to New York state. He died on January 14, 2006.

## **Laurence I. Martin**

Private First Class Lawrence Ira Martin was one of the original members of the 38th Tank Company. After his activation, he was assigned to the Battalion Headquarters in tank maintenance and driving a truck and attended cook's school at Ft. Knox. He was taken prisoner on 10 or 11 April and drove a truck to Mariveles where they were held at the air field. He survived the Death March. At San Fernando he was put on a train to Capas and the final march to Camp O'Donnell where he was a cook. He was sent on a work detail to San Fernando to collect scrap metal. He became ill and was sent to a hospital in Pampang. He was



eventually sent to Bilibid Prison in an isolation ward. He was sent on work details to McKinley Field and Nelson Field and held at Camp Murphy. He became sicker and was returned to Bilibid. He was put aboard a ship and sent to Japan, Hiroshima #4 where he worked in the shipyards. He returned to Harrodsburg and was discharged from the army in April, 1946. He died on December 18, 2007.

## **William E. Blacketer**

Private William Elwood Blacketer enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime before it was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan. He was put aboard the Hell Ship Nissyo Maru and was sent to Moji, Japan and was held at Oeyama Camp where he worked in a nickel refinery. He was liberated on 2 September 1945.



## **Albert B. Moore**

Private Albert Bland Moore joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime before the activation in November 1940. He was transferred to Headquarters Company when it was formed in January 1941. During the attack, Bland was delivering lunch to members of the tank crews at their tanks. As he drove, his truck was strafed by a Japanese Zero. He shot down one plane with a machine gun. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 the unit's trucks were used to move them to Mariveles and



survived the Death March. At San Fernando he was put on a train for Capas. From there they marched to Camp O'Donnell. He went out on a work detail and operated a jackhammer. He was later sent to Cabanatuan. He was sent on a work detail to Nelson Field to build runways with picks and shovels. He was later sent to Bilibid Prison. He was put aboard the Hell Ship Noto Maru and sent to Moji, Japan and was sent to Tanagawa where he worked on the construction of a dry dock for submarines. He was later sent to Mukashima Camp and worked in a coal mine. He was liberated in 1945. He returned to Kentucky after the war. He died on April 27, 2006.

## **Marcus A. Lawson**

Sergeant Marcus Arnold Lawson was one of the original members of the Harrodsburg National Guard Company. At Ft Knox he was promoted to Corporal and then Sergeant and made a tank commander and instructor. Robert Brooks from Sadieville joined the unit from active duty at Fort Knox and was Lawson's tank driver. Brooks was killed in the initial attack in the Philippines and Lawson took over his duties. Lawson with others took a boat to Corregidor where he was attached to the Fourth Marine Division. They were taken prisoner and eventually moved to Bilibid Prison outside Manila and then on to Cabanatuan #3 and later Cabanatuan Camp #1. He was put on the Nagato Maru sailed for Moji, Japan and taken to Tanagawa #4-B working on building a dry dock. He was sent to a Japanese Army Hospital on an experimental detail and given different pills everyday for eight weeks. He was later sent to Osaka #1 where he worked as a stevedore. He was later sent back to Tanagawa #4-B and working on the dry dock. When the war was over he managed to find his way to an American unit. After extensive medical stays at various hospitals and was discharged on November 5, 1946, as a Staff Sergeant. He returned to Kentucky. He suffered vision problems for the rest of his life. He passed away in Florida on August 6, 2005.



## **William Peavler**

Private First Class William Peavler joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before the activation in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Cabanatuan and Bilibid Prison. He worked in sugar cane in Formosa before being sent to Japan aboard the Hell Ship Hokusen Maru and Melbourne Maru to Moji, Japan in January 1945 to Sendai Camp #3 where he worked in lead and zinc mining. He was liberated on 12 September 1945. He died on 4 March 1978.



## **John E. Sadler**

Sergeant John Elmore Sadler joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime before the activation with his brother Campbell. They escaped Bataan to Corregidor and was sent to the Malanta Tunnel. He later went to Fort Drum. When he was taken prisoner he was eventually sent to Bilibid Prison and on to



Cabanatan #1. He was put on a truck to be moved to another camp and was reunited with his brother. He was later returned to Cabanatuan #1 hospital. He was put on the Hell Ship Clyde Maru and sailed to Moji, Japan and Fukuoka #17 where he worked in a coal mine. He ran out of the building he was in and saw a mushroom shaped cloud across the bay over Nagasaki. After a time the men left the camp and made their way to the American troops. He was eventually flown to the Philippines and reunited again with his brother. John Sadler died on September 23, 1968.

### **Charlie R. Quinn**

Sergeant Charles Robert Quinn enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 6 May 1942 and was held at Cabanatuan. He was liberated on 31 December 1944 by the U. S. Army Rangers. He died on 8 November 1998 in Crescent City, California



### **William D. Sparrow**

Sergeant William D. "Doc" Sparrow, Jr. joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before the unit was activated in November 1940. When Bataan fell, he escaped to Corregidor where he was put on beach defense facing Bataan with the attached to the Fourth Marine Division. They were taken prisoner and eventually moved to Bilibid Prison and on to Cabanatuan Camp #3. He was later sent to Cabanatuan Camp #1. He was put aboard the Nagato Maru sailed Moji, Japan and taken to Tanagawa #4-B where he worked building a dry dock. He was later sent to a graphite factory. He was sent Tsuruga POW Camp on a work detail as stevedores unloading ships. When the POWs were finally liberated, they were returned to the Philippines. He remained there until it was determined that he was healthy enough to return home to Harrodsburg. He died on May 5, 1952.



### **Field M. Reed Jr**

Private First Class Field McLeod Reed, Jr. joined the Harrodsburg tank company sometime before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was a truck driver for the unit and spent four months attempting to deliver ammunition and gasoline to the tanks, with often only an idea where the tanks might be. He was taken prisoner on April 9, 1942 and made his way to Mariveles where he began the Death March.

A piece of shrapnel wounded Reed during the march from an artillery round fired from Corregidor, in an exchange with Japanese artillery near the march route. He was able to barrow a hidden knife and cut the shrapnel out of his leg.



Near San Fernando, Field was bayoneted by a guard and he continued the march bleeding. He was put on a train to Capas and then marched to Camp O'Donnell. He was later sent to Cabanatuan and then on to a work detail to Las Pinas to work on runways at Nichols Field. Here he received a beating from his captors that resulted in permanent hearing loss. He was later put in a sweatbox for two weeks for breaking a guard's jaw. He was then returned to Cabanatuan. He was still there when the U.S. Army Rangers liberated the prisoners in January 1945 and they made it safely to the American lines. He returned to Harrodsburg.

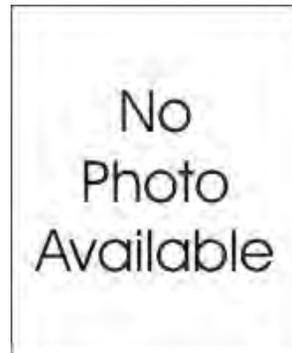
### **George E. Chumley**

Staff Sergeant George Everett Chumley joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime in the late 1930's. After the fall of Bataan he made his way to Corregidor in Middleside barracks and later Fort Drum until it was surrendered on May 6, 1942. He was first sent to Bilibid Prison and later to Cabanatuan working on the camp farm. He was put aboard the Hell Ship Clyde Maru for Moji, and to Fukuoka Camp #17 where he worked in a coal mine where he nearly lost his foot. After liberation he returned to Harrodsburg. He died on May 21, 1988.



### **Campbell K. Sadler**

Private Campbell King Sadler enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime before the unit was activated along with his brother John. It is believed that around the time Bataan fell he made his way to Corregidor. He was taken prisoner on 6 May 1942 and was held at Bilibid Prison and Cabanatuan. He was put aboard the Hell Ship Noto Maru for Moji, Japan and he was sent to Fukuoka #8. He was liberated in September 1945. He died on 12 November 1972.



### **Earl Fowler**

Private First Class Earl William Fowler enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before the unit was federalized in November 1940. He was taken prisoner when Corregidor fell on 6 May 1942 and was held at Cabanatuan and Bilibid Prison. He was put aboard a ship and sent to Korea and then Manchuria and the Shenyang Sub-Camp. He was liberated in September 1945 by the Russians. He died on 14 April 2007.



## **Ernest L. Sampson Jr**

Private Ernest Logan Sampson, Jr. enlisted in the Kentucky National Guard sometime before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 6 May 1942 when Corregidor fell. He was held at Cabanatuan and was sent to Japan's Narumi Camp where he worked in wheel manufacturing for the Nippon Wheel Manufacturing Company. He was liberated in September 1945. He died on 1 December 2001.



## **Lonnie L. Gray**

Private Lonnie Lee Gray joined the Harrodsburg National Guard some time before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell, Cabanatuan and Bilibid Prison. He was sent to Japan and Shinjuku Camp #1. He was liberated on September 1945. He died on 10 April 1987.



## **Cecil J. Sims**

Private First Class Cecil J. Sims enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan. He was put aboard the Hell Ship Nissho Maru and sent to Moji, Japan and eventually sent to Fukuoka Camp #4 where he worked as a stevedore loading ships and trains. He was liberated on 13 September 1945. He was discharged in July 1946. He returned to Harrodsburg and was an eighth grade teacher at McAfee Grade School there. He died on 21 August 1990.



## **Charles E. Reed**

Private First Class Charles Edmond Reed enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard some time before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was trained as a tank driver. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Calauan where he worked on a bridge building detail. He was also held at Cabanatuan and Bilibid Prison. He was put aboard the Hell Ship



Taga Maru for Moji, Japan and was taken to Niigata 5-B where he worked as a stevedore. He died on 11 August 1967.

## **Reid Shewmaker**

Private Ried Shewmaker enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unite sometime before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Cabanatuan, and Davao where he worked an experimental farm. He was also held at Bilibid Prison. He was put aboard a Hell Ship Yashu Maru and Teiryō Maru. He was sent to Cebu City, Mindano and eventually back to Manilla and then Bilibid Prison where he was liberated on 5 February 1945 by the 148th Infantry Regiment. He died on 1 September 1983.



## **Garratt G. Royalty**

Private First Class Garratt Gilbert Royalty joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before it was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on April 9, 1942. He survived the Death March from Mariveles to San Fernando where he was put on a train to Capas for the final march to Camp O'Donnell. He went out on work details to rebuild bridges. He was later sent to Cabanatuan where he was on the farm detail. He was later taken to Bilibid Prison for medical treatment and eventually returned to Cabanatuan. He was liberated by American Rangers on January 30, 1945. He returned to Harrodsburg, after the war. He died in January, 1985.



## **Marvin D. Taylor**

Private Marvin Dexter Taylor enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime before it was activated in September 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942. He was held at Camp O'Donnell, Cabanatuan where he worked in the Manila Port Area Detail. He was sent to Kamioka POW Camp in Japan and was liberated in September 1945. He died on 27 August 1947.



## Judson D. Simpson

Sergeant Judson David Simpson joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit at before it was activated in November 1940. Judson was awarded the Silver Star for his actions during the defense of Bataan. He was wounded in action and awarded the Purple Heart. He was taken prisoner in April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan. He was later sent by ship to Korea and by train to Manchuria and Shenyang Camp where he was liberated by the Russian Army in September 1945. He died on November 19, 1980.



## Cecil Vandiver

Private Cecil Raymond Vandiver joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit in 1939. He was assigned as a cook in Headquarters Company. On April 9, 1942 he was taken prisoner. He survived the Death March. At San Fernando they were loaded into steel boxcars to Capas and then the final march to Camp O'Donnell. He was later sent to Cabanatuan #1 and was on a work detail to rebuild bridges. He was later put on a Hell Ship bound for Korea but was turned around because of suspected submarine activity. They remained in the ships for days before setting sail again. They finally arrived at Pusan where they were put on a train for Manchuria. At Mukden he unloaded sacks of cement and coal. He later worked in a steel mill. He eventually returned to Harrodsburg after the war. He died on 27 October 1999



## Ralph Stine

Private First Class Ralph Lee Stine joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit on December 5, 1939. He was taken prisoner in Mariveles on April 9, 1942. He was in a field hospital but was not moved for some two months when he was sent to Manila and worked on building runways. He was sent to Formosa on the hell ship Hokusen Maru and was held at Toroku Camp. He was later sent Japan on the Melbourne Maru and was held at a camp near Kobi where he worked in a steel mill. He was later sent to Osaka and Maibara #10-B. He was liberated in September 1945. He eventually returned to Harrodsburg. He died on 4 March 2003.



## **Grover D. Whittinghill**

Private Grover David Whittinghill enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime before they were activated in November 1941. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan. He was later sent to Formosa and eventually Japan's Sendai Camp #3. He was liberated in September 1945. He died on 7 June 1980.



## **Lucien F. Yankey**

Private Lucian F. Yankey enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before they were activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan and was on Formosa at Karenko and Shirakawa. He was later sent to Hoten in Manchuria. He was liberated by the Russians in September 1945. He died on May 28, 1967.



## **Company D, 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion, Harrodsburg's Kentucky Guardsmen Who Perished During Captivity**

### **Elzie E. Anness**

Sergeant Elzie E. Anness, Headquarters Company, 192nd Light Tank Battalion joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime before it was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942. It is not known whether he was on the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell, Cabanatuan and Las Pinas. He was sent to Japan on the Hell Ship Nagato Maru and he was sent to Tanagawa Camp, Osaka, Japan and worked building a dry dock. He died on 27 January 1943 at Camp Tanagawa, Osaka, Japan of dysentery.



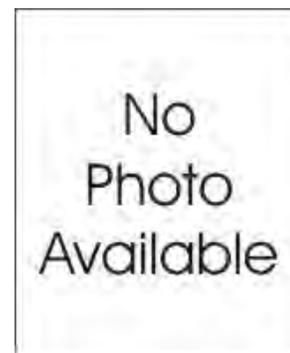
### **Johnnie Bottoms**

Technical Sergeant Johnnie Bottoms joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before they were activated. He later was assigned to Headquarters Company. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March arriving at Camp O'Donnell. He went out on a work detail to repair bridges. He died of malaria on 1 June 1942 at Calauan Camp #3. His remains were returned to Harrodsburg after the war.



### **Vernon H. Bussell**

Private Vernon H. Bussell joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before they were activated in November 1940. He was later assigned to Headquarters Company. They were taken prisoner on 11 April 1942. They were trucked to Mariveles where he began the Death March eventually ending up at Camp O'Donnell. At some point he was sent to Manila to work on vehicles in a garage. He was later put aboard the Hell Ship Arisan Maru bound for Formosa. He was lost at sea when an American submarine attacked the unmarked prisoner transport on 24 October 1944.



## **Robert V. Cloyd**

Private First Class Robert V. Cloyd joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before they were activated in November 1940. He was then assigned to Headquarters Company. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1941 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan and was on a work detail building runways at Las Pinas. He was put aboard the Hell Ship Arisan Maru bound for Formosa. He was lost at sea when an American submarine attacked the unmarked prisoner transport on 24 October 1944.



## **Ancel Edgar Crick**

Private First Class Ancel Edgar Crick joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime before they were activated in November 1940. He was transferred to Headquarters Company. He was taken prisoner on 11 April 1942 when they were put on trucks for Mariveles. He survived the Death March and eventually to Camp O'Donnell and later at Cabanatuan. He was on a work detail for a time at Las Pinas building runways. He was later put aboard the Hell Ship Arisan Maru bound for Formosa. He was lost at sea when an American submarine attacked the unmarked prisoner transport on 24 October 1944.



## **John L. Cummins**

Private First Class John Lewis Cummins joined the Harrodsburg National Guard's unit some time before it was activated in November 1940. He was later transferred to Headquarters Company. He was taken prisoner on 11 April 1942 and moved in trucks to Mariveles. He survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O' Donnell where he went on a work detail to repair bridges. He was then sent to Cabanatuan and later to Bilibid Prison. He was later put aboard the Hell Ship Arisan Maru bound for Formosa. He was lost at sea when an American submarine attacked the unmarked prisoner transport on 24 October 1944.



## Oscar Dean

Sergeant Oscar Dean joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before it was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1941 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan where he died of dysentery on 20 October 42. His remains were later returned to Zachary Taylor National Cemetery in Louisville.



## Wallace Denny

Staff Sergeant Wallace Denny, born in South Carolina, enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan #1. He died there of dysentery on 22 July 1942.



## Ben R. Devine

Sergeant Ben R. Devine enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard some time before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell where he died of dysentery on 19 May 1942.



## Willard Emmal Foster

Private Willard Emmal Foster joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before they were activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1941 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan #1. He died of dysentery on 1 June 1942.



## Edward T. French

Sergeant Edward Theodore French joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit, along with his brother Morgan, some time before they were activated in November 1940.

He was injured by shrapnel from Japanese bombing and was in a field hospital on Bataan. In an attempt to prevent the American guns on Corregidor and Ft. Drum from firing on their artillery, the Japanese placed their guns among the buildings of the hospital. When a shell fired from Ft. Drum fell short and hit the hospital, Edward, along with 24 other soldiers, was killed on 22 April 1942 as a result of "friendly fire." He was awarded a Purple Heart for injuries received during combat.



## Roy E. Goodpaster

Private Roy Edward Goodpaster enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit just five days before they were activated in November 1940 and was trained as a tank driver. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan #1. He was put on three Hell Ships, Oryoku Maru, Enoura Maru and Brazil Maru. The first two were sunk before the third finally took him to Moji, Japan where he was held at Fukuoka #4 and the Moji Hospital. He later died of injuries he sustained during the sinking of the first two Hell Ships he was on.



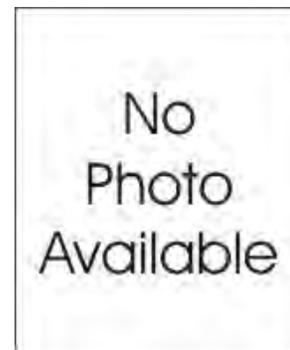
## Wesley Davis Hungate

Private First Class Wesley Davis Hungate enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell where he died on 16 May 1942 of dysentery. His remains were later returned to Camp Nelson National Cemetery near Nicholasville



## Berchell Keeling

Technical Sergeant Berchell Keeling enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard some time before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner and held at Cabanatuan. He died of dysentery on 1 July 1942.



## Harry R. LaFon, Jr.

Second Lieutenant Harry Ricker LaFon, Jr., born in Virginia, joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before they were activated in November 1940. He arrived at Fort Knox as a Private but quickly rose to Sergeant. After the Camp Polk maneuvers he resigned from the army and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell Cabanatuan. He was later sent to the Davao Penal Colony on the Island of Mindanao to work on a labor detail. He was put on board the Tateishi Maru for Manila. They were then transferred to the Shinyo Maru. The U.S.S Paddle attacked the unmarked prisoner transport off the west coast of Mindanao and he was lost when it sank on 7 September 1944.



## Fred C. Leonard, Jr.

Private Fred C. Leonard, Jr. joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit sometime before it was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan #1. He died on 28 July 1942 at Camp Cabanatuan of cerebral malaria.



## Hugh J. Leonard

Private Hugh J. Leonard enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before they were activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942. He survived the Bataan Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell, Cabanatuan and Davao, Mindanao. He was on three Hell Ships, Interisland Steamer, Transport 86 and Shinyo Maru. The U.S.S Paddle attacked the unmarked prisoner transport off the west coast of Mindanao and he was lost when it sank on 7 September 1944.



## Joseph B. Million

Staff Sergeant Joseph Baxter Million enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit at some time before they were activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942. He survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell, Cabanatuan #1, Batangas and Palawan Island. He died on 14 December 44 when he was burned to death during the Palawan



Island Massacre. He remains were later returned to Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, St. Louis, Missouri.

## **Everett R. Preston**

Second Lieutenant Everett R. Preston joined the Harrodsburg National Guard at some time before the unit was activated in November 1940. During his time on Bataan, Everett was assigned to C and A Companies. He was wounded on 2 February 1942 in an engagement against the Japanese and received the Purple Heart. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942. He survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell, Cabanatuan and Bilibid Prison. He was put aboard the Erie Maru for Davao on Mindano. He was again put on board a Hell Ship, the Yashu Maru and taken to Cebu to Manila on the Singoto Maru back to Bilibid Prison. He was put on another Hell Ship, the Oryoku Maru bound for Takao, Formosa. The ship was attacked by Navy planes seventeen times before sunset and six bombs hit the ship. The next day the Navy resumed the attack. The POWs were finally swam ashore near Olongapa, Subic Bay, Luzon as the Navy planes realized it was a prisoner transport and stopped the attack. They surviving prisoners were moved by train to Manila and put aboard the Enoura Maru bound for Formosa. The ship was bombed and sunk by American planes on January 13, 1945, while it was still docked. Two days later, he boarded the Brazil Maru enroute to Moji, Japan. By the time he arrived and was sent to Fukuoka Camp #1-D for work in the Onoda Coal Mine. He died of Acute Enteritis on April 21, 1945. His remains were returned to Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St. Louis after the war.



## **Archibald B. Rue**

Second Lieutenant Archibald B. "Arch" Rue joined the Harrodsburg National Guard with his brother Edwin some time before the unit was activated in November 1941. He was taken prisoner on April 9, 1941. He survived the Death March and was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan. He was sent to Bilibid Prison as and eventually put on board the Oryoku Maru for transport to Japan. The ship was attacked by Navy planes seventeen times before sunset and six bombs hit the ship. The next day the Navy resumed the attack. The POWs were finally swam ashore near Olongapa, Subic Bay, Luzon as the Navy planes realized it was a prisoner transport and stopped the attack. They surviving prisoners were moved by train to Manila and put aboard the Enoura Maru bound for Formosa. The ship was bombed and sunk by American planes on January 13, 1945, while it was still docked. Two days later, he boarded the Brazil Maru enroute to Moji, Japan. By the time he arrived and was sent to Fukuoka Camp #22 but soon was ill. He died of Acute Enteritis on April 21, 1945. After the war, at the request of his family, his remains were returned to the United States and buried in Arlington National Cemetery.



## **Hezakiah F. Sallee**

Sergeant Hezakiah Franklin "Heze" Sallee enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit with his brother James at some point before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell, Cabanatuan. He was put aboard the Hell Ship Clyde Maru and sent to Japan in August 1943. He was sent to Fukuoka #17 where he worked in a coal mine. He died on 6 June 1944 from a fractured skull he received in a coal mine accident.



## **James William Sallee**

Private James William Sallee joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit with his brother Heze some time before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan. He was put on the Hell Ship Arisan Maru and died on 24 October 1944 when the ship was sunk.



## **Jennings B. Scanlon**

Sergeant Jennings Bryan Scanlon enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before the unit was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1941 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan #1 where he died of dysentery on 8 June 1942.



## **Herbert C. Steele**

Private Herbert C. Steele enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit at some time before they were activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell where he died of dysentery on 13 June 1942.



## **Yandell Terhune**

First Sergeant Yandell Terhune enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time prior to the activation in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan #1. He died of dysentery on 12 July 1942 at Cabanatuan #1.



## **Edward V. Trisler**

Corporal Edward Vivion Trisler joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time prior to the activation in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan #1. He died of dysentery at Cabanatuan on December 23, 1942.



## **George A. Vanarsdale**

First Lieutenant George A. "Jimmy" Vanarsdale joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before the activation in November 1940.

In early 1941, he was transferred to Headquarters Company. He was taken prisoner on 11 April 1942 and were put on trucks to Mariveles. He survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan. He was later taken to Bilibid Prison and put onboard the Oryoku Maru for transport to Japan.



Enroute the ship was attacked by Navy planes seventeen times before sunset and six bombs hit the ship. The next day the Navy resumed the attack. The POWs were finally swam ashore near Olongapa, Subic Bay, Luzon as the Navy planes realized it was a prisoner transport and stopped the attack. They surviving prisoners were moved by train to Manila and put aboard the Enoura Maru bound for Formosa. The ship was bombed and sunk by American planes on January 12, 1945, while it was still docked. He died during the attack and subsequent sinking. After the war the remains of the American soldiers who died in the sinking of the Enoura Maru were exhumed and reburied in the Punch Bowl in Hawaii.

### **Edward G. Willis**

Private Edward George Willis enlisted in the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before it was activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1942 and survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan. He died on 3 July 1942 of dysentery at Camp Cabanatuan.



### **Willard R. Yeast**

Private Willard R. Yeast joined the Harrodsburg National Guard unit some time before they were activated in November 1940. He was taken prisoner on 9 April 1941. He survived the Death March. He was held at Camp O'Donnell, Cabanatuan, Batangas and Palawan Island. He died on 14 December 1944 when he was burned to death during the Palawan Island Massacre.



## Harrodsburg Tankers Memorial

The Harrodsburg Tanker Memorial was dedicated on 15 June 1961, and proudly stands as a tribute to the men from Harrodsburg who endured so much.

The memorial plaque reads:

*To honor the men of Mercer County, Kentucky, who were members of the Provisional Tank Group, United States Army Forces in the Far East. The first American Force to engage an enemy in tank warfare in World War II.*

*The men whose names appear on this monument sailed from San Francisco 27 October 1941 under sealed orders with the 192<sup>nd</sup> GHQ Tank Battalion and arrived at Manila 20 November 1941, they fought to defend Bataan and Corregidor, "One of the decisive battles of the world," in a long protracted struggle to save the Pacific and Australia from enemy hands while the United Nations gathered strength to resist.*

Two lists of names following the text, those who gave their lives for their country, and those who survived and returned to their Mercer County homes.



## 2008 Program – Proclamation, Coin and cancellation 26 April 2008 Program

The Kentucky National Guard will present an award-winning documentary on the Harrodsburg Tankers that endured the Bataan Death March of World War II on April 26, 2008.

**"BATAAN – The Harrodsburg Tankers: A Time For Courage ... A Time For Heroes"** will highlight the days events honoring Kentucky's fighting men during World War II.

The Kentucky National Guard, Kentucky Historical Society, the City of Harrodsburg, Mercer County and the Harrodsburg Historical Society will join with the local community on Saturday, April 26, 2008 paying tribute to their own home town heroes – the Harrodsburg Tankers.

Following a 5-K run and a 10 mile march by the Boy Scouts, there will be historical discussions conducted by nationally recognized historians and then the world premiere of **"BATAAN – The Harrodsburg Tankers: A Time For Courage ... A Time For Heroes."** The award-winning documentary chronicles the participation of the Kentucky Army National Guard's 38th Tank Company, later - Company D, 192nd Light Tank Battalion, in World War II and the experiences of its Soldiers, many of whom endured the infamous "Bataan Death March."

The public is invited to attend this free showing.

Events for APRIL 26, 2008 include:

8 a.m. Bataan Tankers 5k Run / Walk

Boy Scouts Bataan Tankers 10 Mile March  
Fort Harrod State Park, Harrodsburg

10 a.m. Opening ceremony

Fort Harrod State Park, Harrodsburg

1 p.m. Historians Roundtable

James Harrod Conference Center, Harrodsburg

**Historians Roundtable.** The public is invited to join a panel discussion of the history of the Harrodsburg Tankers. Members of the audience will be encouraged to ask questions and share their own stories about the Harrodsburg tankers.

The moderator will be Jim Opolony, Coordinator of the Proviso East Bataan Commemorative Project. Opolony is a teacher at Proviso East High School in Maywood, Illinois and he along with two other teachers started the Proviso East High School Bataan Commemorative Research Project website during the 1999 -2000 school year. The website, still an ongoing project, has become one of the most respected resources available about the men of Harrodsburg and all those who served in the 192nd Tank Battalion.

The panel members for the roundtable are:

Russell Harris, Senior Associate Editor of Publications and The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society. Harris has done extensive research about the Harrodsburg Tankers and has published one of the key works on the subject in The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society. For articles on World War II, he has received both state and national awards. He is the editor or author of some eighty articles and essays, as well as a prize-winning documentary and *George Rogers Clark and His Men: Military Records, 1778-1784* (1981).

Dr. Rich Holl, Professor of History at Lees College Campus of Hazard Community College and Technical School, is the author of *From the Boardroom to the War Room: America's Corporate Liberals and FDR's Preparedness Program* (2005), the co-editor of a Kentucky history textbook, and the author of an award-winning article on POW camps in Kentucky during World War II. He is working on a history of the Kentucky home front during the Second World War.

Col. (R) Arthur L. Kelly has interviewed some one hundred Kentucky veterans of World War II (including several of the Harrodsburg Tankers). These and many other tapes comprise the Arthur L. Kelly Veterans of World War II Oral History Collection at the University of Kentucky. He is also the author of *Battlefire!: Combat Stories of World War II* (1997), which included a chapter profiling the experiences of Harrodsburg Tanker Field M. "Jack" Reed.

Christopher L. Kolakowski, Executive Director of the Perryville Battlefield Preservation Association, has also worked for the National Park Service and the Civil War Preservation Trust. Author of numerous articles, including a profile of Harrodsburg Tanker William Gentry in *Kentucky Humanities* (2007), his career has been devoted to interpreting and preserving American military history. He currently offers a talk about the Tankers through the Kentucky Humanities Council's Speakers Bureau.

#### 6 p.m. Reception

Kentucky Army National Guard 202ND Army Band providing music  
Norton Center for the Arts, Centre College, Danville

#### 6:45 p.m. Reception for premiere

Norton Center for the Arts, Centre College, Danville

#### 7 p.m. World premiere: "BATAAN – The Harrodsburg Tankers: A Time For Courage ... A Time For Heroes"

Norton Center for the Arts, Centre College, Danville

**Documentary Premiere.** A free public viewing of the documentary "BATAAN – The Harrodsburg Tankers: A Time For Courage ... A Time For Heroes" will be preceded by a reception held at the Norton Center for the Arts, Centre College. Music will be provided by a quartet of the 202nd Army Band of the Kentucky National Guard.

The screening begins at 6:45 p.m. with brief remarks by Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, Adjutant General for Kentucky.

## **Kentucky Governor's Proclamation Honoring the Harrodsburg Tankers**

- Whereas, Harrodsburg has a long and distinguished history of service in the Kentucky National Guard and individuals from the community have unhesitatingly answered the call to serve our nation and our Commonwealth, and
- Whereas, in 1921, the 38<sup>th</sup> Tank Company was organized at Harrodsburg, eventually becoming Company D, 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion, and
- Whereas, in 1940, this unit was Federalized into the Regular Army, sent to Fort Knox for training, and then onto the Louisiana Maneuvers. In November 1941, the unit arrived in the Philippines and within eighteen days they were attacked by the armed forces of Imperial Japan, and
- Whereas, after four months of hard fought battles against overwhelming Japanese Forces, the American and Philippine forces were ordered to surrender. During their captivity, many of the surviving members of the Harrodsburg unit were forced to endure the infamous "Bataan Death March, all of the Harrodsburg men survived the march, and
- Whereas, these Kentucky men were then imprisoned, at prisoner of war camps O'Donnell and Cabanatuan, forced into the holds of the Japanese "Hell Ships" and shipped to camps, factories and coal mines in Formosa, Manchuria and Japan, enduring unimaginable living conditions and torture. Liberation for these men who had endured so much, came in 1945, and
- Whereas, of the original sixty-six who left Harrodsburg in 1940, only thirty-seven returned, and
- Whereas, April 26, 2008, marks a day of celebration and remembrance of these men with the premier of the historical documentary, "Bataan: A Time for Courage, A Time for Heroes. A video which documents the story of the brave men, known as the Harrodsburg Tankers.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Steve Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, do hereby proclaim April 26, 2008 as

### **HARRODSBURG TANKERS – BATAAN MEMORIAL DAY**

in Kentucky, and urge all citizens to make special recognition and remembrance of the members of this Kentucky National Guard unit as they exhibited unparalleled heroism, dedication, devotion and sacrifice in the service of our Nation and Commonwealth.

## Commemorative Coin

Limited edition commemorative coin minted for the event.



**192 TANK BN 3**

## U. S. Postal Service Cancellation



Special U. S. Postal Service Cancellation to commemorate the event.

## End Notes

---

- <sup>i</sup> Written by Louise Isham Dean for ceremony conducted honoring the Harrodsburg Tankers, 14 June 1981.
- <sup>ii</sup> “Bataan Death March Survivors, 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion, Kentucky National Guard.” Collection of reminiscences of 15 Kentucky National guardsmen from Company D, 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion who defended the Philippine Islands at the outbreak of World War II. The interviews were conducted by William J. Dennis in 1961 and the transcripts typed in 1976. Transcripts are at the Kentucky Department for Military Affairs, Military Records and Research Library, Frankfort. The original tape recordings are at the Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort. Notes from these transcripts are hereafter cited as BDM. Much of the information in Chapter Two was extracted from these interviews. Proper names have been corrected under standardized spellings throughout the text.
- <sup>iii</sup> Interview with Edwin W. Rue, 24 March 1961, p.1, BDM.
- <sup>iv</sup> Military Laws of the United States (Army) Annotated 1949, 9th ed., (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1951), 1351.
- <sup>v</sup> Interview with Cecil Vandiver, 17 March 1961, p. 2, BDM.
- <sup>vi</sup> Interview with William Gentry, 16 June 1961, p. 6, BDM.
- <sup>vii</sup> Interview with Lawrence Martin, 16 March 1961, p. 1, BDM.
- <sup>viii</sup> Louis Norton, *The Fall of the Philippines*. United States Army in World War II. (Washington D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1953), 33.
- <sup>ix</sup> Interview with William Gentry, 16 June 1961, p. 8, BDM.
- <sup>x</sup> Interview with Maurice E. (Jack) Wilson, 15 March 1961, p. 2, BDM.
- <sup>xi</sup> Memorandum from C. Bogart to V. Keene, 5 July 1985, Military Records and Research Library, Frankfort. Bogart obtained information regarding Pvt. Brooks through correspondence with members of the 192d Tank Battalion including those drafted with him.
- <sup>xii</sup> Letter from Headquarters of the Armored Force, Public Relations Bureau, Fort Knox, Kentucky, 13 January 1942.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Stanley L. Falk, *Bataan: The March of Death*. (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University, 1962), 28.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Interview with Grover Whittinghill, 22 March 1961, p. 2, BDM.
- <sup>xv</sup> Interview with Marcus Lawson, 16 March 1961, p. 2, BDM.
- <sup>xvi</sup> Morton, *The Fall of the Philippines*, 169.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Interview with William Gentry, 16 June 1961, p. 10, BDM; Vincent Esposito, ed. *West Point Atlas of American Wars, 1900-1953, Vol. II*. (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1959), Map 120.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Interview with William Gentry, 16 June 1961, p. 13, BDM.
- <sup>xix</sup> Interview with Edwin E. Rue, 24 March 1961, p. 5, BDM.
- <sup>xx</sup> Stanley L. Falk, *Bataan: The March of Death*, 54.
- <sup>xxi</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Interview with William Gentry, 16 June 1961, p. 15, BDM.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Interview with Cecil Vandiver, 17 March 1961, p. 3, BDM.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- <sup>xxv</sup> Interview with Charles Reed, 24 March 1961, p. 2, BDM.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Interview with Ralph Stine, 24 March 1961, p. 1, BDM.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Interview with Marcus A. Lawson, 16 March 1961, p. 4, BDM.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Interview with John Elmore Sadler, 15 March 1961, p. 3, BDM.
- <sup>xxix</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>xxx</sup> Interview with Maurice E. (Jack) Wilson, 15 March 1961, pp. 6-8, BDM.
- <sup>xxxi</sup> Interview with John Elmore Sadler, 15 March 1961, p. 3; Interview with Joe Riley Anness, 19 March 1961, p. 8, BDM.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Interview with Joe Riley Anness, 19 March 1961, BDM.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Interview with Claude Yeast, 17 March 1961, p. 2, BDM.
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Interview with Maurice E. (Jack) Wilson, 16 March 1961, p. 18, BDM.
- <sup>xxxv</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> Interview with William Gentry, 16 June 1961, p. 16, BDM.
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> Interview with Cecil Vandiver, 17 March 1961, pp. 5-6, BDM.
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> Interview with Edwin Rue, 24 March 1961, p. 7, BDM.

---

xxxix *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>xl</sup> Interview with Maurice E. (Jack) Wilson, 15 March 1961, p. 12, BDM.

<sup>xli</sup> Interview with Earl Fowler, 17 March 1961, p. 5, BDM.

<sup>xlii</sup> Interview with Lawrence Martin, 16 March 1961, p. 6, BDM.

<sup>xliii</sup> Interview with Joe Riley Anness, 19 March 1961, p. 10, BDM.

<sup>xliv</sup> Interview with Grover Whittinghill, 22 March 1961, p. 4, BDM.

<sup>xlv</sup> Interview with Kenneth Hourigan, 15 March 1961, p. 5, BDM.

<sup>xlvi</sup> Interview with Marcus A. Lawson, 16 March 1961, pp. 9-10, BDM.

<sup>xlvii</sup> Interview with John Elmore Sadler, 15 March 1961, p. 5, BDM.

<sup>xlviii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>xlix</sup> Interview with William Gentry, 16 June 1961, p. 16, BDM.

<sup>l</sup> Interview with Grover Whittinghill, 22 March 1961, p. 6, BDM.

<sup>li</sup> Executive Order #9396, Section 2, 1942.

<sup>lii</sup> General Orders #101, War Department, 1945.

<sup>liii</sup> Information courtesy Tom Fugate.

## Bibliography

### Books:

- Caraccilo, Dominic J. ed. *Surviving Bataan And Beyond: Colonel Irvin Alexander's Odyssey As A Japanese Prisoner Of War* (Stackpole Military History Series). Mechanicsburg, PA.: Stackpole Books, 2005.
- Dyess, William E. *The Dyess story; the eye-witness account of the death march from Bataan and the narrative of experiences in Japanese prison camps and of eventual escape, by Lt. Col. Wm. E. Dyess*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1944.
- Hatch, Gardner. *American Ex-Prisoners of War*. Paducah, KY: Turner Publishing Co., 1988.
- Kelly, Arthur. *Battlefire!: Combat Stories from World War II*. Lexington, KY.: University Press of Kentucky, 1997.
- Kentucky Adjutant General's Office. *The Provisional Tank Group, United States Forces in the Far East*. Frankfort, KY.: Kentucky National Guard, 1961.
- Kentucky Historical Society. *Bataan Death March Survivors/192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion of the Kentucky National Guard*. Frankfort, KY.: Kentucky Historical Society, 1981. (transcriptions of oral histories conducted in 1961-62).
- Knox, Donald. *Death March: the survivors of Bataan*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981.
- Lajzer, Joseph D. *3.6 years of hell in Japanese prisoner of war camps, 1942-1945*. San Antonio, TX.: Watercress Press, 2002.
- Lawton, Manny, and John Toland. *Some Survived: An Eyewitness Account of the Bataan Death March and the Men Who Lived Through It*. Chapel Hill, NC.: Algonquin Books, 2004.
- Michno, Gregory. *Death on the Hellships: Prisoners at Sea in the Pacific War*. Annapolis, MD.: United States Naval Institute Press, 2001.
- Miller, Ernest B. *Bataan Uncensored*. Long Prairie, MN: The Hart Publications Inc., 1949.
- Morton, Louis. *The Fall of the Philippines, United States Army in World War II Series*. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1953.
- Ortega, Abel, Jr. *Courage on Bataan and Beyond*. Bloomington, IN.: AuthorHouse, 2005.
- Poweleit, Alvin C. *USAFFE, the loyal Americans and faithful Filipinos: a saga of atrocities perpetrated during the fall of the Philippines, the Bataan Death March, and Japanese imprisonment and survival*. Newport, KY.: s.p., 1975.
- Poweleit, Alvin C. *Kentucky's Fighting 192nd Light G.H.Q. Tank Battalion: A Saga of Kentucky's Part in the Defense of the Philippines*. Newport, KY.: s.p., 1981.
- Romulo, Carlos. *I Saw the Fall of the Philippines*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1943.
- Sides, Hampton. *Ghost Soldiers: The Forgotten Epic Story of World War II's Most Dramatic Mission*. New York: Doubleday, 2001.
- Sawicki, James A. *Tank Battalions of the US Army*. Dumfries, VA: Wyvern Publications, 1983.
- Tenney, Lester. *My Hitch in Hell: The Bataan Death March* (Memories of War). Dulles, VA.: Potomac Books Inc.; Special edition, 2007.

Toland, John. *But Not In Shame: The Six Months After Pearl Harbor*. New York: Random House, 1961.

Wainwright, Jonathan M. *General Wainwright's Story*. New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1946.

Weaver, James R. N. *Operations of the Provisional Tank Group, United States Army Forces in the Far East, 1941-1942*. (Original letter at National Archives, Washington, DC).

**Periodicals:**

Cornell, Tod. "Americans forced to surrender Bataan, Corregidor Islands," *On Guard*, (May 1992) 11.

Harris, James Russell, "The Harrodsburg Tankers: Bataan, Prison, and the Bonds of Community," *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, 86, 3 (Summer 1988), 230-277.

Kolakowski, Christopher L. "A Kentuckian on Bataan," *Kentucky Humanities*, (October 2007).

Page, Walter Page, "Forty Years Ago in Hell," *Kentucky Monthly* (April 1981), 33.

Wallace, Lew H., and James C. Claypool, "Brief Moments of Glory: Weaver's Warriors – The 192<sup>nd</sup> "Kentucky" Tank Battalion in the Philippines," *The Filson Club History Quarterly*, (October 1994), v. 68, 4, 484-498.

Wallace, Lew H., James C. Claypool, ed., "The 192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion in the Philippines," *Armor*, (Jan-Feb) 1989, 26- 32.

**Oral Histories:**

Harrodsburg Tank Battalion in the Philippines: Survivors of the Bataan Death March Oral History Collection. Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Ky., 1961-62.

